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Global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, section XIX, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide a refined and detailed proposal on the global service delivery model. The report addresses the requests made by the Assembly in its resolution and provides an update on the status of the project since the issuance of the framework report for a global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat (A/70/323).

As indicated in paragraphs 1 to 8 of the framework report, the administrative architecture of the Secretariat constitutes some 98 stand-alone entities that serve individual duty stations or specific departments and offices with a structure that needs to become leaner, more effective and cost-efficient. To establish an administrative service delivery that is suitable for current and evolving operational needs of the Secretariat, the Secretariat must shift to a new service delivery model. Such a model will ensure synergies and sharing of infrastructure to the extent possible, while taking into account the specific requirements of different parts of the Secretariat, including peacekeeping and other field-oriented entities. The model will leverage the expertise available across the Secretariat and the potential of all recent transformative initiatives, combining the prudent stewardship of resources with results orientation and a renewed focus on quality and timeliness of service delivery.

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The report sets out the vision for the global service delivery model and progress on the development of the model, including baseline information and qualitative and quantitative benefits. Subject to the decisions to be taken by the General Assembly on the present report, the Secretary-General will include detailed proposals in the respective budget proposals. In order to develop the global service delivery model, resources are requested to manage the detailed design and execution of the project.

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I. Introduction

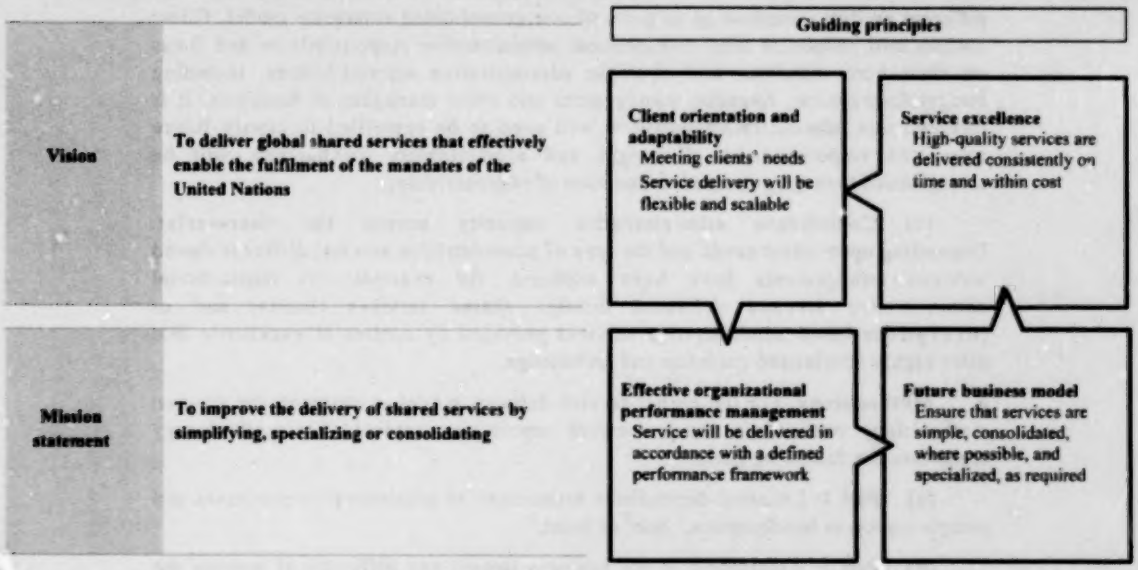
1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, section XIX, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a detailed proposal for a global service delivery model for consideration at its main seventy-first session. The report builds upon the work outlined in the Secretary-General's report on the framework for a global service delivery model of the United Nations Secretariat (A/70/323) (hereinafter referred to as the "framework report"). The related decisions of the General Assembly, as well as associated observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and oversight bodies, have been taken into account in preparing the report.

II. Vision, mission and guiding principles

2. As indicated in the framework report and in line with his goal of creating a truly global Secretariat, the Secretary-General envisions a Secretariat better able to deliver on its mandates, supported by administrative services that provide what is needed, when needed and where needed. The enterprise-wide approach will deliver high-quality, timely and standardized administrative services across the global Secretariat, placing client needs, operational imperatives and results foremost, while ensuring appropriate control, oversight and cost-effectiveness.

3. As endorsed by the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee, the vision of the global service delivery model is to provide administrative support services that effectively enable the fulfilment of the mandates of the United Nations, guided by the principles of: client orientation and adaptability; service excellence; effective organizational performance management; and simplification, specialization and consolidation of the future business model. Figure I provides an illustration of the vision statement.

Figure I
Vision, mission and guiding principles


Guiding principles
Vision
To deliver global shared services that effectively enable the fulfilment of the mandates of the United Nations
Mission statement
To improve the delivery of shared services by simplifying, specializing or consolidating
Client orientation and adaptability
Meeting clients' needs
Service delivery will be flexible and scalable
Service excellence
High-quality services are delivered consistently on time and within cost
Effective organizational performance management
Service will be delivered in accordance with a defined performance framework
Future business model
Ensure that services are simple, consolidated, where possible, and specialized, as required

III. Scope and methodology of the global service delivery model project

4. **Scope.** In accordance with section XIX of General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, the development of the global service delivery model is limited to the provision of administrative support services.

5. The development of the global service delivery model takes into account lessons learned and best practices of: the ongoing business transformation initiatives; the implementation and use of shared services within the Secretariat and the United Nations system; relevant observations and recommendations of oversight bodies; and benchmarks from similar initiatives in the public sector. Administrative support services are being reviewed in line with the direction outlined in the framework report, as follows:

(a) **Simplify the administrative functions and workflow**. The complex administrative structures of the Secretariat, including key administrative policies, procedures and delegations of authority, are being reviewed so as to increase agility and responsiveness to operational needs. Administrative processes continue to be analysed to abolish redundant and non-value-adding process steps. Consideration is also being given to how to leverage information and communications technology in the delivery of an end-to-end administrative process;

(b) **Specialize administrative responsibilities under distinct roles**. The Organization's administrative architecture will be realigned to better distinguish

strategic from operational activities and strategic oversight from administrative service delivery. Specialization at each level of the Secretariat will allow for greater concentration of expertise and consistency of administrative services delivery, with different entities contributing as parts of one consolidated enterprise model. Client entities will relinquish most transactional administrative responsibilities and focus on their core mandates and strategic administrative responsibilities, including budget formulation, financial management and other management functions. It is foreseen that administrative positions will need to be reprofiled to clarify future roles and responsibilities. Oversight and accountability mechanisms will be strengthened through enhanced delineation of responsibility;

(c) **Consolidate administrative capacity across the Secretariat**. Depending upon client needs and the type of administrative service, different shared services arrangements have been explored, for example: (i) transactional administrative services delivered through shared services centres; and or (ii) expertise-based administrative services provided by centres of excellence that offer highly specialized guidance and knowledge.

6. **Methodology**. For the global service delivery model assessment, the six-part methodology outlined in the framework report was applied. The methodology comprises the following parts:

(a) Part 1: Location-dependence assessment of administrative processes and categorization as headquarters,[1] hub[2] or local;[3]

(b) Part 2: Assessment of the business impact and difficulty of moving the process to a shared service centre;

(c) Part 3: Mapping of functional roles to the corresponding organizational structures in the Secretariat, in order to identify where functional roles are currently located and quantify the workload expended for each process (see sect. V and annex III);

(d) Part 4: Identification of potential sites for consolidated administrative services, taking into account qualitative and cost-benefit considerations (see sect. VI.B);

(e) Part 5: Development of a business case for the global service delivery model (see sect. V, VI.A and annex III);

(f) Part 6: Development of a risk framework to assess potential risks and articulate a risk mitigation strategy (see sect. VI.E).

[1] Headquarters functions are the provision of strategic direction, formulation of policy, oversight and leadership on stakeholder engagement.

[2] Location-independence, or hub, describes processes that are either performed locally but have the potential to be partially or fully consolidated, simplified or automated in a shared service environment; or processes that are led by United Nations Headquarters/offices away from Headquarters but can be performed in other locations.

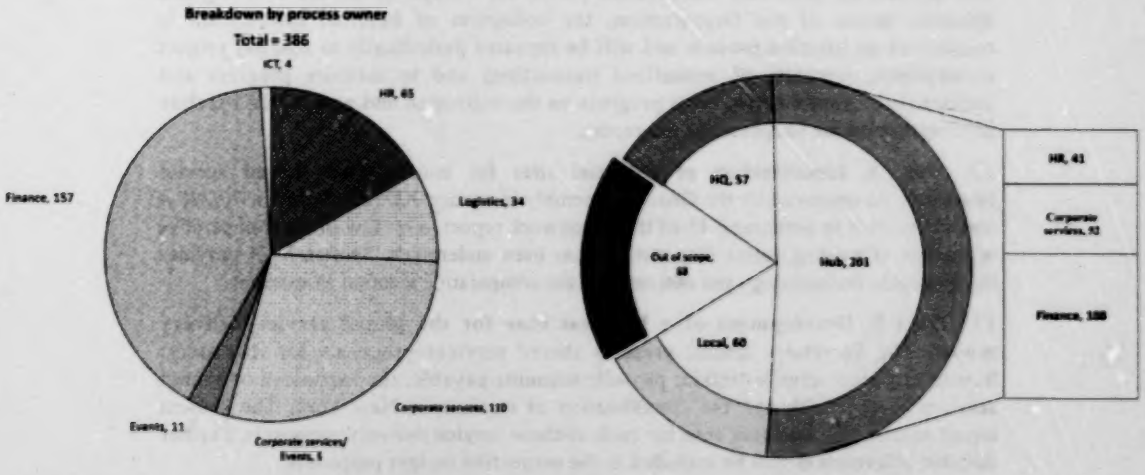
[3] Local office functions are the performance of location-dependent, non-transferable processes.

IV. Summary of the global service delivery model assessment of 2016

7. **Part 1. Location-dependence process assessment and categorization.** As indicated in paragraph 28 of the framework report, 142 location-independent processes were identified as having potential for a shared services approach. In early 2016, as part of the global service delivery model assessment phase, 386 administrative processes, including processes that are being delivered in and outside of Umoja, the Secretariat's enterprise resource planning tool, were reassessed and categorized. The assessment took into account the experience of the roll-out of Umoja, and the decisions of the General Assembly in its resolution 70/248 A, in which the Assembly stressed that the development of the global service delivery model should be limited to the provision of administrative support services and emphasized that functions primarily involving direct interactions with Member States, including troop-contributing countries, would continue to be located at Headquarters. Figure II provides the results of the process assessment of 2016.

8. On the basis of the assessment of 2016: 68 Umoja processes were considered out of scope, as these will be deployed as part of Umoja Extension 2 and may be considered in the future; 57 processes were categorized as headquarters or relating to the provision of strategic direction, formulation of policy, oversight and leadership on stakeholder engagement; 60 processes were categorized as local or location-dependent and non-transferable, such as the formulation of budgets, the coordination of audits, staff selection and other management functions; and 201 processes were categorized as hub or location-independent, with potential for consolidation into shared service arrangements.

Figure II
Process assessment of 2016



Abbreviations: HQ, Headquarters; HR, human resources; ICT, information and communications technology.

9. **Part 2. Assessment of the business impact and difficulty of moving processes**. The 201 processes identified as location-independent were evaluated in terms of ease of implementation (risk tolerance and process simplicity), and priority (potential benefit and readiness). The results of the analysis indicated that human resources administration, payroll, accounts payable, travel and procurement were all potential candidates for inclusion in a shared services environment. On the basis of the evaluation, the recommendations of the process owners, as well as leading practices in shared services, the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee, on 13 May 2016, endorsed the further study on three end-to-end processes: human resources administration and payroll; procurement and accounts payable; and travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing. In addition, two management initiatives were endorsed: the expansion of shared services to the field; and the consolidation of services within existing duty stations. The further detailed study of these five initiatives has been guided by the design principles outlined in paragraph 33 of the framework report. It should be noted that not all of the 201 processes categorized as "hub" have been included in the further study. As such, there are processes that may also be suitable for shared services that will be studied at a later stage as part of the global service delivery model. Section V and annex III provide the results from the detailed study of 2016.

10. **Part 3. Mapping of functional roles to corresponding organizational structures**. The project team, with the support of specialized consultants and functional working groups for each of the end-to-end processes identified elements such as the volume of activity, the locations from which the service is provided, indicative full-time equivalents (FTEs) and preliminary estimates of quantitative benefits. Annex III provides baseline information for the proposals in the report.

11. The Secretary-General has reassessed, as requested in paragraph 10 of section XIX of General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, his proposal for taking February 2016 as a baseline for the development of the global service delivery model business case, taking into account the necessary stabilization period for Umoja. Given the evolving and dynamic nature of the Organization, the collection of baseline information is considered an iterative process and will be repeated periodically to confirm project assumptions, forecasts of annualized transactions and to measure progress and performance. Annex III provides progress on the collection and analysis of baseline information on the proposals in the report.

12. **Part 4. Identification of potential sites for consolidated shared service functions**. As requested by the General Assembly in section XIX of resolution 70/248 A and as outlined in paragraph 45 of the framework report, a review of the comparative advantage of existing major duty stations has been undertaken. Section VI.B provides the approach, methodology and outcomes of the comparative location assessment.

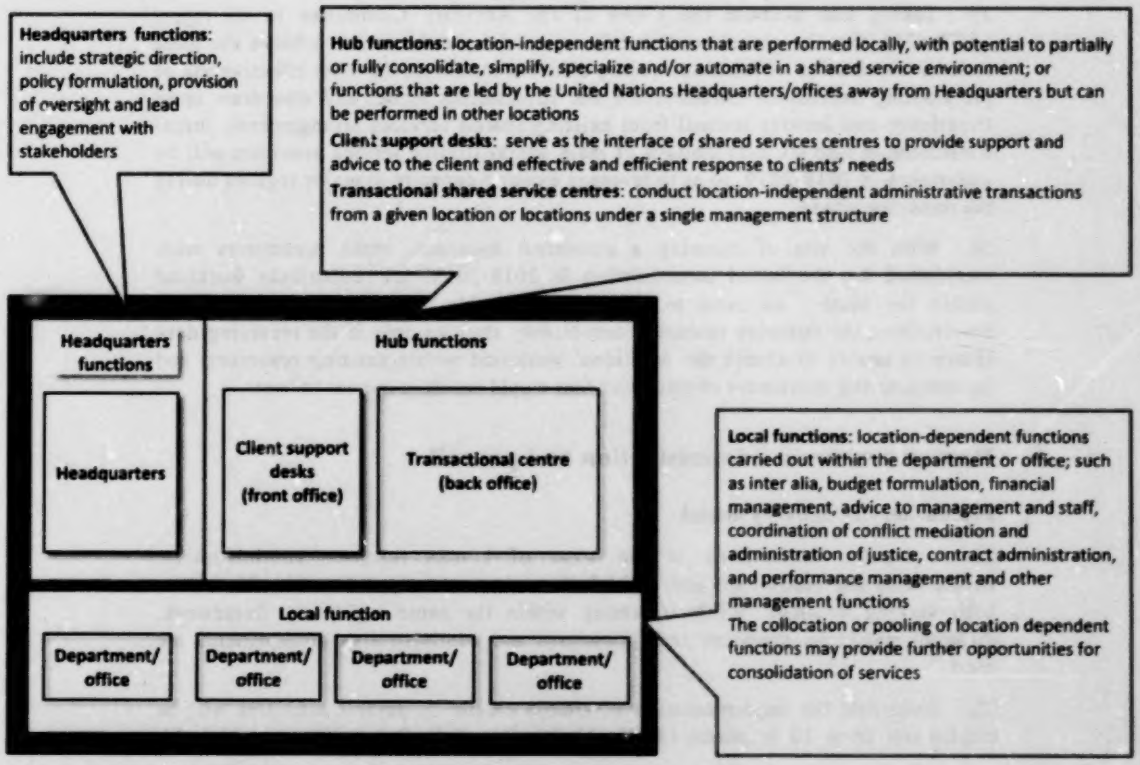
13. **Part 5. Development of a business case for the global service delivery model**. The Secretary-General presents shared services proposals for five areas: human resources administration; payroll; accounts payable; the expansion of shared services to the field; and the consolidation of services in New York. The present report sets out the business case for each of these service delivery proposals. Further detailed information will be included in the respective budget proposals.

14. **Part 6. Formulation of a global service delivery model risk framework.** The Secretary-General, in paragraph 43 of the framework report, states that the global service delivery model has been included in the organizational risk profile under the category "Organizational transformation". The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 36 of its report (A/70/436), considered that "the implementation of a new service delivery model will have a significant impact on organizational structures of the United Nations Secretariat, lines of accountability, working methods, processes and procedures". Section VI.E describes the envisaged risk framework of the global service delivery model.

V. Service delivery proposals of the global service delivery model

15. The global service delivery model will realign the Secretariat's administrative architecture to better distinguish strategic from operational activities and strategic oversight from administrative service delivery. It will clarify roles and responsibilities and establish the required authority of each entity. Figure III is an illustration of the envisaged global service delivery model administrative architecture.

Figure III
Administrative architecture of the global service delivery model


Headquarters functions: include strategic direction, policy formulation, provision of oversight and lead engagement with stakeholders
Hub functions: location-independent functions that are performed locally, with potential to partially or fully consolidate, simplify, specialize and/or automate in a shared service environment; or functions that are led by the United Nations Headquarters/offices away from Headquarters but can be performed in other locations
Client support desks: serve as the interface of shared services centres to provide support and advice to the client and effective and efficient response to clients' needs
Transactional shared service centres: conduct location-independent administrative transactions from a given location or locations under a single management structure
Headquarters functions
Hub functions
Headquarters
Client support desks (front office)
Transactional centre (back office)
Local function
Department/ office
Department/ office
Department/ office
Department/ office
Local functions: location-dependent functions carried out within the department or office; such as inter alia, budget formulation, financial management, advice to management and staff, coordination of conflict mediation and administration of justice, contract administration, and performance management and other management functions
The collocation or pooling of location dependent functions may provide further opportunities for consolidation of services

16. As indicated in paragraph 9 above, the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee endorsed the further study on three end-to-end process initiatives and two management initiatives. The following paragraphs convey the outcomes of the study.

17. As recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 30 of its report (A/70/436), in developing the proposals, consideration was given to whether processes can be provided from a single location for the entire Secretariat. Given the broad nature of the work of the Organization and the need to ensure that functions could continue to be carried out in the event that one location was temporarily unable to operate, a minimum of two locations with capacity to operate critical functions is necessary for business continuity. Some activities could, however, be provided Secretariat-wide from a single location, such as those to be provided by a centre of excellence.

18. With the objective of reaching the minimum number of end-state locations, a phased approach is being proposed. A transition phase of initial consolidation is proposed in 2018-2019 (phase 1) in order to achieve the end-state in 2020-2021 (phase 2). The phased approach will provide valuable lessons and the opportunity to refine the end-state design on the basis of those lessons. It will also help to raise awareness of the direction in which the Organization is heading and better prepare the Secretariat and its staff for the forthcoming changes.

19. Taking into account the views of the Advisory Committee in its report (A/70/436), that the global service delivery model should aim to achieve the most rational distribution of functions among different locations, the most effective use of the existing Secretariat infrastructure and investments made, and also draw upon experience and lessons learned from existing shared services arrangements, initial consolidation into six duty stations of main administrative service providers will be undertaken in 2018-2019, so as to leverage existing capacity in major regions during the transition phase.

20. With the aim of ensuring a consistent approach, three parameters were established for the initial consolidation in 2018-2019: (a) redistribute workload within the same time zone to the extent possible, taking into account local specificities; (b) redeploy resources across duty stations only if the receiving duty station is unable to absorb the additional workload within existing resources; and (c) mitigate any movement of resources that would result in increased costs.

A. Human resources administration and payroll

Present service delivery model

21. Currently, transactions in the areas of human resource administration, entitlements and consultants and individual contractors are processed by 26 entities with varying volumes. While operating within the same regulatory framework, different standards, practices and procedures and administrative arrangements are used.

22. Following the implementation of Umoja cluster 5, payroll activities will be carried out from 10 locations (Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi,

New York, Santiago and Vienna, as well as Entebbe, Uganda, and Kuwait (for national staff and individual uniformed personnel of field missions)).

23. In New York, human resources and finance staff from the executive offices and the Human Resources Services of the Office of Human Resources Management were co-located on an ad hoc basis in the temporary Headquarters deployment group for the implementation of Umoja.

Future service delivery model

24. The future human resource administration and payroll service delivery model will deliver high quality, timely and standardized services across the Secretariat through shared services centres. Each service centre will deliver all human resources administration services, including onboarding and staff movements, contract administration, entitlements, separations, and administration of consultants and individual contractors, and payroll services, and will include operational monitoring and support, to all client entities and staff in a seamless process with a single point of entry for the client.

25. Human resources administration and payroll service delivery will consolidate the delivery of location-independent processes based on entity and consist of:

(a) Client support desks, to serve as the interface with staff and other clients to provide support and advice;

(b) Transaction centres, to process human resources transactions in Umoja and Inspira, and to handle payroll processes, including an operational support desk, to handle improperly processed and complex retroactive transactions;

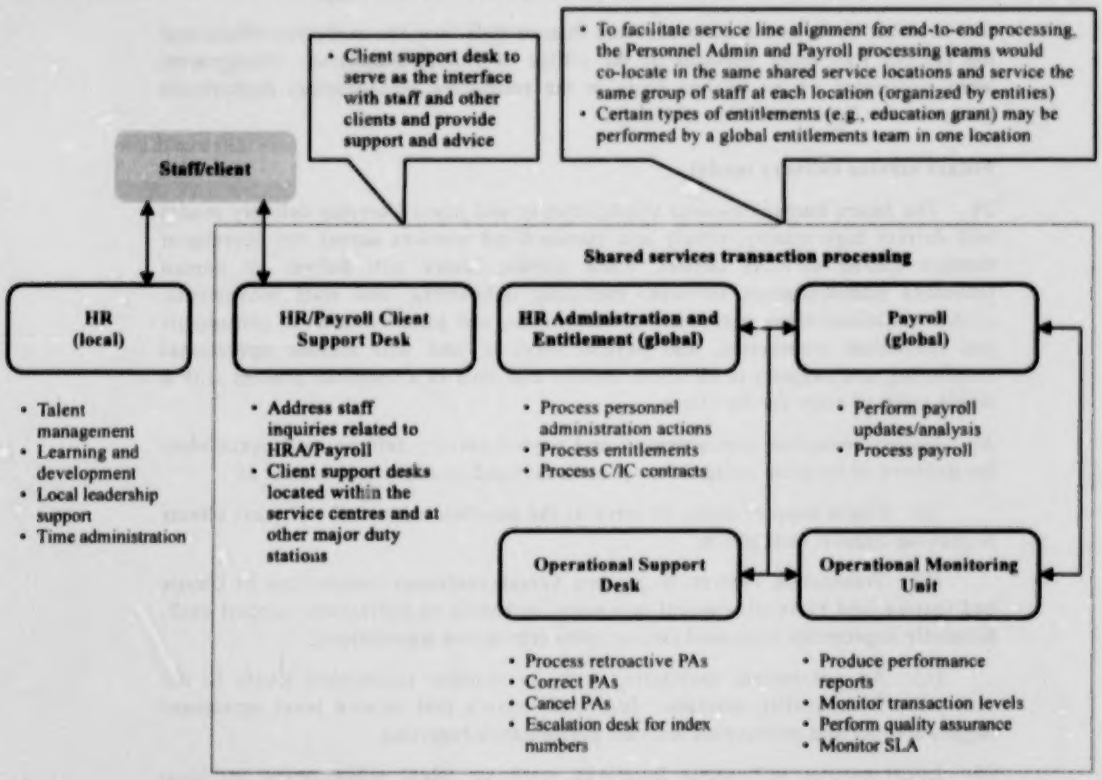
(c) An operational monitoring unit, to monitor transaction levels in the centre, perform quality assurance functions, ensure that service level agreement targets are met and produce all relevant performance reporting.

26. Local entities will retain functions, such as: talent management for local recruitment, including local work force planning and staff selection; learning, development and performance management; time administration functions; and support to the head of department/office and programme managers in carrying out their responsibilities.

27. The Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts will continue to carry out headquarters functions in providing strategic direction, formulation of policy, oversight and leadership on stakeholder engagement for human resources and payroll, respectively.

28. Figure IV depicts the end-to-end process, as it would be performed under the future human resources administration and payroll service delivery model. It identifies the activities that would be locally retained, the transactions that would be performed in a shared services centre and the role of the client support desks.

Figure IV
Human resources administration and payroll blueprint


• Client support desk to serve as the interface with staff and other clients and provide support and advice
• To facilitate service line alignment for end-to-end processing, the Personnel Admin and Payroll processing teams would co-locate in the same shared service locations and service the same group of staff at each location (organized by entities)
• Certain types of entitlements (e.g., education grant) may be performed by a global entitlements team in one location
Staff/client
Shared services transaction processing
HR (local)
HR/Payroll Client Support Desk
HR Administration and Entitlement (global)
Payroll (global)
• Talent management
• Learning and development
• Local leadership support
• Time administration
• Address staff inquiries related to HRA/Payroll
• Client support desks located within the service centres and at other major duty stations
• Process personnel administration actions
• Process entitlements
• Process C/IC contracts
• Perform payroll updates/analysis
• Process payroll
Operational Support Desk
Operational Monitoring Unit
• Process retroactive PAs
• Correct PAs
• Cancel PAs
• Escalation desk for index numbers
• Produce performance reports
• Monitor transaction levels
• Perform quality assurance
• Monitor SLA

Abbreviations: C/IC, consultant and individual contractor; HR, human resources; HRA, human resources administration; PA, personnel action; SLA, service-level agreement.

The case for change

29. The present decentralized human resources administration service delivery model has resulted in procedural inconsistencies across offices for clients and staff, and variations in responsibilities of human resources staff have created differences in the client experience. This has impeded the Secretariat's ability to administer a set of unified standards for human resources administration and performance management. In addition, there have been limited opportunities to scale services and achieve cost reductions.

30. Payroll activities are already delivered in a partially consolidated manner by teams in 10 locations (following the implementation of Umoja cluster 5). Further consolidation and alignment with human resources administration and the global service delivery model will improve workload distribution and end-to-end processing, resulting in economies of scale.

31. The consolidation of the human resource administration and payroll functions into two transactional shared services centres, with client support desks at the service centres and at major duty stations, will enable the Secretariat to create a simple and seamless experience for all staff and client entities. In particular, service centres will enable the Secretariat to: manage business continuity risks; improve workload distribution; clearly define roles and responsibilities; and administer standardized processes for transactional functions across the Secretariat. The client support desks will provide staff with easy access to support for language and/or time-sensitive queries. The desks will serve as a single point of entry for clients and effectively act as a gate between the transaction centres and the clients, thereby ensuring a clearer delineation of roles and greater efficiency in transactional processing.

Implementation plan

32. **Phase 1**. In preparation for phase 2, as reflected in paragraphs 18 to 20 above, the initial consolidation into six duty stations of main administrative service providers will be undertaken in 2018-2019 to leverage existing capacity in major regions during the transition phase, namely: New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna, Bangkok and Entebbe. The transactional workload distribution in 2018-2019, subject to the organizational design, will be as follows:

(a) New York will be responsible to provide human resources administration and payroll services to all New-York based entities, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and field missions in the region, such as the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Mission in Colombia;[4] the centre will continue to provide payroll services for all entities based in New York, as well as for international staff in field missions;

(b) Geneva will be responsible to provide human resources administration and payroll services to its current clients, plus field offices of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA);

(c) Nairobi will be responsible to provide human resources administration and payroll services to its current clients, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA);

(d) Vienna will continue to provide human resources administration and payroll services to its current clients;

(e) Bangkok will continue to provide human resources administration and payroll services to its current clients and other assigned administrative services, as appropriate;

(f) Entebbe will continue to provide human resources administration and payroll services (national staff and individual uniformed personnel) to its current and expanded group of clients.

33. Client support desks will be set up at the six duty stations, as well as in Santiago, Beirut and Addis Ababa, to maintain close client proximity. For example,

[4] Subject to decision of the Security Council on the mandates of MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia.

transactions related to ESCWA personnel will be consolidated in Nairobi, along with the required resources to perform these transactions, while Beirut will have a client support desk for staff support functions.

34. **Phase 2**. In line with the global service delivery model design principles, it is envisioned that human resources administration and payroll functions can be consolidated globally into two shared services centres and will achieve benefits as outlined in the report. This effort will include: defining the functions and responsibilities of shared services centres and those retained by Secretariat departments, offices, regional commissions and field missions; the continual review of delegations of authority and the fine-tuning of reporting and accountability lines, service level agreements with key performance indicators and mechanisms for escalating any arising issues. The locations of the service centres are yet to be determined (see sect. VI.B below).

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

35. **Qualitative benefits**. The expected benefits of the global service delivery model were articulated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 25 of the framework report and are summarized in section VI.A of the present report. For human resources administration and payroll, the focus is on achieving improvements in the delivery of administrative services (ensuring the maintenance of high quality and client-oriented service) and on reducing the related costs. The global service delivery model of human resources administration and payroll will ensure: end-to-end processing and a seamless client experience with a single point of entry; better defined governance arrangements and accountability, including simplified delegations of authority; consistency of service delivery; efficient service delivery in terms of quality, timeliness and cost; business continuity of human resources administration and payroll functions; integration of field and non-field staff and non-staff administration and payroll; and enhanced process standardization and controls.

36. **Quantitative benefits**. The approach and progress of the analysis of quantitative benefits of the human resources administration and payroll proposal are outlined in section VI.A below and annex III.

B. Accounts payable

Present service delivery model

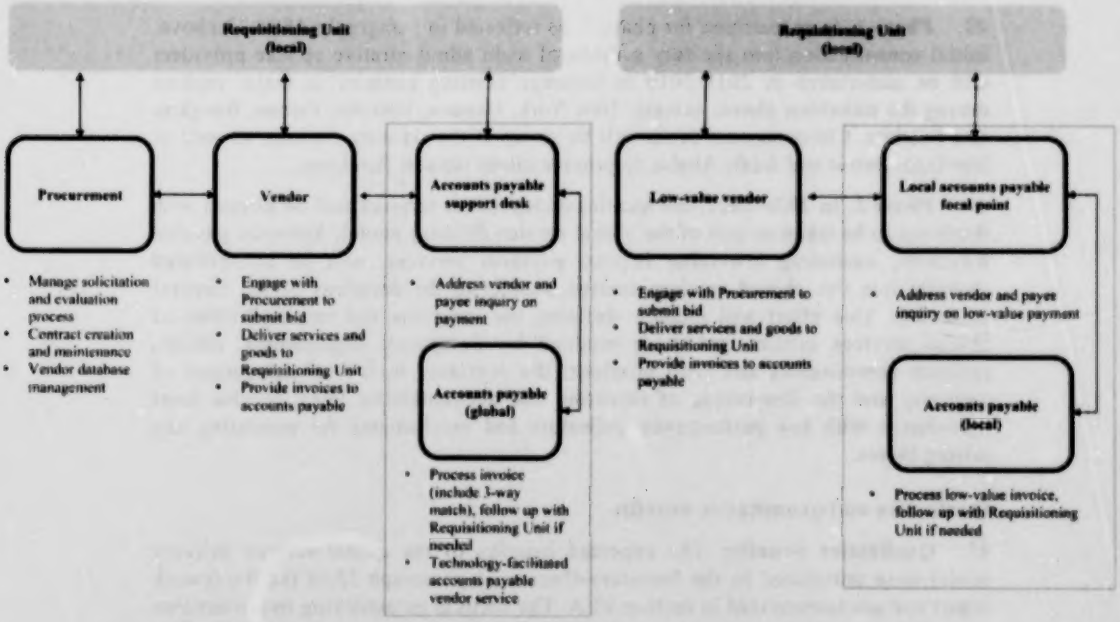
37. The present service delivery model reflects a high level of decentralization and fragmentation for the processing of accounts payable transactions by location, payment type and originating entity. In addition to staff members handling accounts payable transactions on a full-time basis in a number of locations, many other staff members have either created or approved accounts payable documents as part of their wider functions. More than 1,000 staff members have created or approved such a document in the first quarter of 2016.

Future service delivery model

38. The future accounts payable service delivery model will deliver high quality, timely and consistent services across the Secretariat, through shared services centres. Each shared services centre will handle invoice processing with a purchase order; invoice processing without a purchase order; inter-agency invoice processing; and letter of assist to Member States. Adjustments for credit invoice with vendors (also called "netting") could be processed globally by a centre of excellence owing to the cross-entity nature of this activity. Consideration will be given to the alignment of accounts payable services to the future procurement service delivery model as it evolves in 2020-2021. Each service centre will include a client support desk to provide support and policy advice to staff, as well as a one-stop shop for vendor inquiries.

39. Figure V depicts the end-to-end process, as it would be performed under the global accounts payable service delivery model. It outlines the activities that would be locally retained, the transactions that would be performed in a shared services centre and the role of the client support desks with respect to accounts payable processing.

Figure V
Blueprint for accounts payable service delivery


Requisitioning Unit (local)
Procurement
Vendor
Accounts payable support desk
Requisitioning Unit (local)
Low-value vendor
Local accounts payable focal point
• Manage solicitation and evaluation process
• Contract creation and maintenance
• Vendor database management
• Engage with Procurement to submit bid
• Deliver services and goods to Requisitioning Unit
• Provide invoices to accounts payable
• Address vendor and payee inquiry on payment
Accounts payable (global)
• Process invoice (include 3-way match), follow up with Requisitioning Unit if needed
• Technology-facilitated accounts payable vendor service
• Engage with Procurement to submit bid
• Deliver services and goods to Requisitioning Unit
• Provide invoices to accounts payable
• Address vendor and payee inquiry on low-value payment
Accounts payable (local)
• Process low-value invoice, follow up with Requisitioning Unit if needed

40. Local retained functions will include: low-value invoice payments and management of petty cash. In addition, the process to reimburse Member States for the provision of troops and contingent-owned equipment will continue to be handled centrally at Headquarters, as it requires close collaboration with the Permanent

Missions, the Field Budget and Finance Division of the Department of Field Support, the Peacekeeping Finance Division of the Office of Programme Planning Budget and Accounts, and the Cashier.

41. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts will continue to carry out headquarters functions in providing strategic direction, formulation of policy, oversight and leadership on stakeholder engagement.

The case for change

42. The consolidation of processing under dedicated teams in the shared service centres will provide for efficiency gains and increased expertise of the accounts payable processors. It will reduce the number of staff across the Organization who are handling accounts payables as part of a wider portfolio and who create or approve a relatively small number of documents. It will also strengthen the opportunity for greater leverage of system functionalities and technology advances (i.e., invoice scanning, e-invoicing, automated three-way match), which should further improve the quantity and quality of invoices processed, minimizing secondary approval and review requirements. In addition to streamlining internal processes, technology will also improve the vendor experience for submitting invoices and inquiring about payments.

Implementation plan

43. **Phase 1**. In preparation for phase 2, as reflected in paragraphs 18 to 20 above, initial consolidation into six duty stations of main administrative service providers will be undertaken in 2018-2019 to leverage existing capacity in major regions during the transition phase, namely: New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna, Bangkok and Entebbe. Client support desks will be set up at the six duty stations, as well as Santiago, Beirut and Addis Ababa, to provide client support functions.

44. **Phase 2**. In 2020-2021, the location-independent services will be aligned with decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model. Accounts payable functions, excluding low-value invoice payment services, will be consolidated globally into two shared services centres, subject to the decisions of the General Assembly. This effort will include: defining the functions and responsibilities of shared services centres and those retained by Secretariat departments, offices, regional commissions and field missions; the continual review of delegations of authority and the fine-tuning of reporting and accountability lines, service level agreements with key performance indicators and mechanisms for escalating any arising issues.

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

45. **Qualitative benefits**. The expected benefits of the global service delivery model were articulated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 25 of the framework report and are summarized in section VI.A. The focus is on achieving improvements in the delivery of administrative services (ensuring the maintenance of high quality and client-oriented service) and on reducing the related costs. The future service delivery model of accounts payable will ensure: increased efficiency of service in terms of quality, timeliness and cost, and increased expertise; simple, clear process

for client; transparent end-to-end process; achieve economies of scale; improve consistency in practice (e.g., three-way match, etc.) to facilitate further process streamlining; and optimize workload distribution.

46. **Quantitative benefits**. The approach and progress of the analysis of quantitative benefits of the accounts payable proposal are outlined in section VI.A below and annex III. The implementation of a one-stop shop for vendor inquiries related to invoice payments will reinforce the perception by vendors that the Secretariat is equipped to deliver on the payment terms provided for in the contracts, and encourage vendors to agree to the introduction or reinforcement of early payment provisions. Similarly, greater leverage of system functionalities and technology advances will also lead to a reduction of the workforce required for processing. In addition, the increased efficiency resulting from the use of dedicated teams in service centres for non-local invoice payments will result in cost reductions, albeit offset in part by increased requirements to strengthen the monitoring and oversight functions.

C. Travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing

Present service delivery model

47. As part of Umoja deployment, some steps were taken to rationalize the decentralized travel structure. For example, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) travel operations have been consolidated in four global hubs, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) have consolidated most of their global travel operations in Nairobi.

48. However, 59 Secretariat entities process travel and over 100 travel agency partners remain. In some cases, separate Secretariat offices process travel in the same country and even in the same city. Travel offices typically negotiate airline agreements and maintain direct contractual relationships with travel agency partners; though at times these arrangements are shared between offices locally.

Future service delivery model

49. The future travel service delivery model will deliver more consolidated services, thereby securing further efficiencies and providing more consistent service delivery. Regional shared services centres will become responsible for the provision of travel services, across organisational structures, including airline negotiations with carriers, ticketing (through travel agents) and provision of support to travellers and other stakeholders. Regional shared services centres will also perform the vendor ticket payment function. For the travel claims function, further evaluation is needed to determine if the function would be best aligned with the travel or the human resources administration and payroll service delivery model.

50. In addition, two parallel opportunities for consolidation are proposed: (a) the establishment of a global lump sum team; and (b) the establishment of a global shipment team. The global lump sum team will ensure a correct and consistent application of the lump sum calculation across the Secretariat. The global shipment team will maintain necessary shipment system contracts and process shipments of

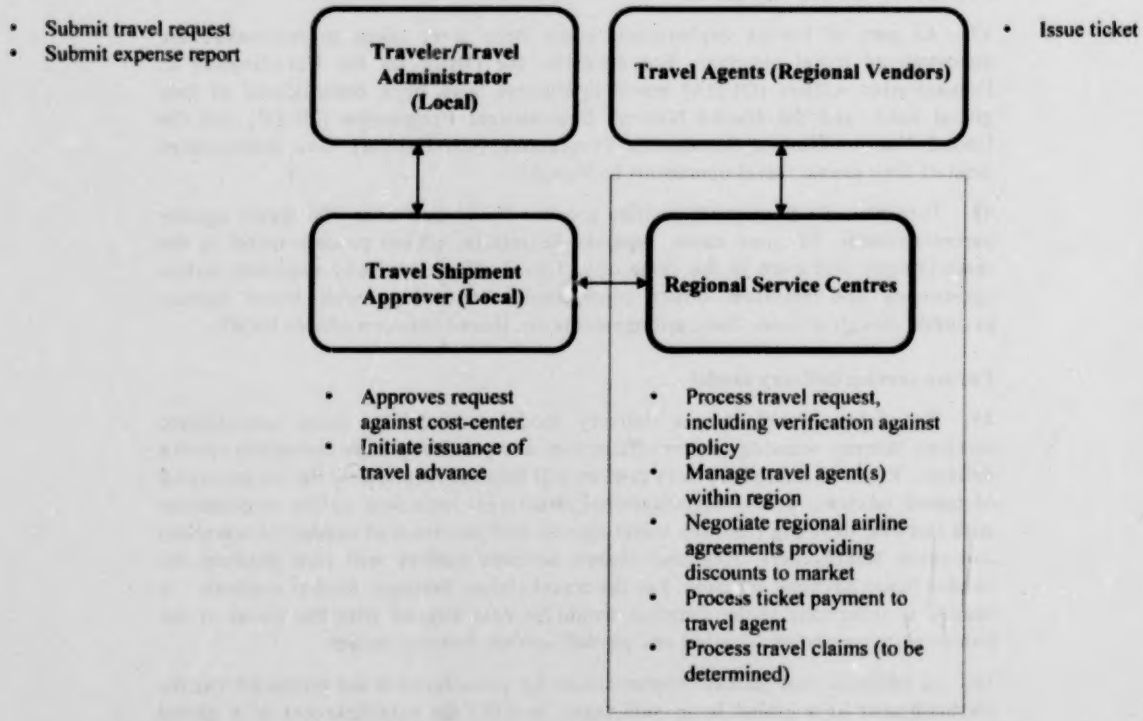
household goods and personal effects related to staff relocation, home leave, family visit and education grant travel.

51. Locally retained functions will include the approval of non-commercial travel, as well as the provision of travel-related services, such as airport duties, visas, reporting personnel changes to the host country, shipment customs clearance assistance and possible conference support.

52. The Office of Central Support Services and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts will continue to carry out headquarters functions in providing strategic direction, the formulation of policy, oversight and leadership on stakeholder engagement related to travel and travel claims and ticket payment, respectively.

53. Figure VI depicts the end-to-end process, as it would be performed under the future travel, travel claims and ticket payment service delivery model. It identifies the activities that would be locally retained and the transactions that would be performed in a regional service centre.

Figure VI
Blueprint for travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing


• Submit travel request
• Submit expense report
Traveler/Travel Administrator (Local)
Travel Agents (Regional Vendors)
• Issue ticket
Travel Shipment Approver (Local)
Regional Service Centres
• Approves request against cost-center
• Initiate issuance of travel advance
• Process travel request, including verification against policy
• Manage travel agent(s) within region
• Negotiate regional airline agreements providing discounts to market
• Process ticket payment to travel agent
• Process travel claims (to be determined)

The case for change

54. The current decentralized travel service delivery model results in significant duplication of overhead in the areas of travel agency procurement and management, and airline negotiations. Furthermore, volumes are not always leveraged towards airline partners, as individual offices conduct their own negotiations with airline partners, foregoing an opportunity to reduce travel expenditure. In addition, travel policy is not applied in a consistent manner, which has also been noted in the recommendations of oversight bodies and staff feedback. Finally, there is a need to streamline current fragmented local procedures. The proposed consolidation into regional shared services centres, with the related integration of the vendor ticket payment and possibly, the travel claims functions, as well as the global lump sum and shipment opportunities, will bring further efficiencies and consistency in the application of travel policy.

Implementation plan

55. At the time of the present report, the consolidation of the travel, travel claims and ticket payment functions required further assessment, detailed analysis and consultation. Further analysis will be undertaken for the proposed consolidation into regional shared services centres in 2020-2021.

56. **Phase 1**. In 2018-2019, the consolidation or co-location of travel processing offices within the same city, and the integration of the vendor ticket payment function with the travel processing offices, will be considered, as well as the establishment of a global lump sum team and a global shipment team. In addition, the envisaged expansion of shared services to the field in 2018-2019 will include the consolidation of travel processing offices of field missions (see sect. V.E) in the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe.

57. **Phase 2**. In 2020-2021, the location-independent services will be aligned with decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model. Travel, travel claims and vendor ticket payment are being considered for consolidation into regional shared services centres. A proposal will be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly in the context of a future progress report.

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

58. Qualitative and quantitative benefits for travel, travel claims and ticket payment will be determined based on the further analysis to be undertaken for the proposed consolidation into regional shared services centres for implementation in 2020-2021. The proposed global service delivery model of travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing will: maintain existing proximity to both clients and vendors; be better equipped to address clients' time-critical requirements and benefit from regional vendor contracts and discounts; and increase the opportunities to achieve economies of scale and cost reductions while maintaining the flexibility to book non-traditional travel outside of vendor contracts, as required. The focus will be to achieve improvements in the delivery of services while ensuring region-specific needs (timeliness of response within same time zone, etc.) are met, and some reduction in related cost.

D. Procurement

Present service delivery model

59. The Organization has a decentralized procurement model with more than 40 distinct procurement operations.

Future service delivery model

60. With the implementation of Umoja and building on work being done through other initiatives, such as the supply chain management and the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the Organization is better positioned to re-examine its procurement operations. On the basis of this experience and with further analysis and consultation, the future service delivery model will consist of greater specialization of strategic and operational activities, clarification of roles and authorities, simplification of procedures to make them more agile and responsive to operational needs and greater consolidation of transactional administrative services.

The case for change

61. The future service delivery model will aim to leverage global buying power, enhance consistency of procurement procedures and operations and ensure the consistent delivery of procurement services that meets the needs of the clients in terms of quality, timeliness and cost, while ensuring proper segregation of duties.

Implementation plan

62. At the time of the present report, the consolidation of procurement functions required further assessment, detailed analysis and consultation. For implementation by no later than 2020-2021, further review and analysis will be required to design an evolutionary and iterative approach that will take into account, among other things, the design and implementation of supply chain and logistics management as part of Umoja Extension 2. A proposal will be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly in the context of a future progress report.

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

63. Qualitative and quantitative benefits for the future service delivery model for procurement will be determined on the basis of the further analysis to be undertaken.

E. Expansion of shared services to the field

Present service delivery model

64. The Department of Field Support has strived to simplify, standardize and consolidate the provision of location independent transactional functions for the 37 field missions it serves through the introduction of shared services. A Regional Service Centre was established in Entebbe to provide logistics, information technology and administrative transactional support, including human resources, payroll and travel. The Regional Service Centre provides support to 12 field

missions, which accounts for approximately 60 per cent of all civilian and uniformed personnel serving in the field. The other 25 missions are not serviced through simplified, standardized or consolidated means. Instead, alternate remote service delivery models in support of field missions remain, such as mission-specific remote back office models and inter-mission long-standing mutual support as well as traditional stand-alone mission support arrangements. These different arrangements have grown organically over time without a standard approach. When considering the Regional Service Centre and these alternate remote service delivery models, approximately 70 per cent of civilian and uniformed personnel in field missions are supported remotely.

Future service delivery model

65. The goal is to ensure that administrative location-independent transactional services for all field missions are supported through shared services arrangements. Building on investments already made in the Regional Service Centre and in an effort to further standardize and streamline administrative support for all field operations, it is proposed to expand the current client base of the Centre to all field operations, using its current model. The associated comprehensive performance management framework will include standardized service-level agreements and key performance indicators. The service delivery model for new client missions would fall under the new governance model adopted by the Department of Field Support on 1 July 2016, when the Centre began reporting directly to the Department. In addition, the present organizational structure and resourcing would be augmented with the necessary additional personnel to support the expanded client base and reflect changes brought about by the deployment of Umoja.

The case for change

66. The current arrangements include a wide-range of service delivery models that are not standardized, resulting in different processes used across different missions and associated inconsistent service delivery. Leveraging shared services would foster standardization to improve service delivery, while also realizing economies of scale through the consolidation of administrative support services in the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe. Given that field missions operate in the world's most complex and volatile environments, there is also significant risk of service disruption at times of crises or change. A stable location has proven to be effective when missions go through transitions, such as retrenchments, start-up and downsizing and having a consolidated location in a more secure and stable environment will help to provide continuous, uninterrupted support provision. This will also reduce costs associated with having personnel in high risk environments. Furthermore, the percentage of security classifications of "substantial", "high", or "extreme" danger has increased from 25 per cent in 2011 to 43 per cent in 2015 in the operating area of field missions. Shifting service provision to a consolidated, more secure location would reduce the number of personnel in insecure environments.

Implementation plan

67. A phased approach is proposed for the consolidation of shared services to all field missions. Phase I will implement a shared services solution for the 25 field

missions currently not supported through shared services arrangements. The scope of services provided by the Department of Field Support and entities covered would be reviewed and may be expanded (or reduced) to cover additional (or fewer) services or other entities, to align with the decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model.

68. **Phase 1**. Phase I will consist of the following:

(a) Transfer of the administrative support services within missions to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe will be done incrementally, taking into consideration factors such as organizational and data readiness, geographical proximity, mission size, field missions budget cycles and phase of a mission (start-up, steady state, drawdown), with the primary objective of ensuring operational continuity and the most effective transition possible. To ensure that this can be achieved, a readiness assessment of the Centre and missions will be conducted early in the design phase. This assessment will also be used as an opportunity to review, validate and possibly adjust the current operating model, including ensuring alignment of the model with Umoja and the performance management framework;

(b) Missions in the Americas region will be serviced out of the shared services centre in New York;

(c) The role of the Kuwait Joint Support Office will be reviewed, taking into account the further development of the global service delivery model, disaster recovery and business continuity requirements and the above-mentioned transition of field missions to the Centre.

69. **Phase 2**. In 2020-2021, location-independent processes will be aligned with the decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model, including consolidation globally into two shared services centres for human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable, subject to decisions of the General Assembly, with further alignment as the model develops and is implemented across the Secretariat. The consolidation of field support will support the future implementation of the global service delivery model through consolidation and reducing the total number of locations providing location-independent functions and standardizing processes.

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

70. **Qualitative benefits**. The expected benefits of the global service delivery model were articulated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 25 of the framework report and are summarized in section VI.A below. The following qualitative benefits are expected to result from covering all field missions through a uniform approach to shared services provision:

(a) Improved standardization, consistency and quality control in remote administrative service provision for all field missions;

(b) Rapid support through an already established, consolidated location outside of the mission areas providing support and management of start-up, evacuations or serious security situations, and more timely, efficient and effective drawdown;

(c) Reduction of the number of personnel in insecure environments;

(d) Further leveraging the experience and investments from the establishment of the Regional Service Centre and its service lines, systems and quality management approaches.

71. **Quantitative benefits**. The approach and progress of the analysis of quantitative benefits of consolidating services in the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe are outlined in section VI below and annex III. The proposed consolidation of field missions currently not supported through shared services arrangements will realize of economies of scale and optimize operating costs.

F. Consolidation of services within existing duty stations

72. The global service delivery model is premised on improving service delivery through simplification, specialization and consolidation. The realignment of functions that are headquarters, hub and local will result in a clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities and provide greater transparency to Member States on resources for administrative support across the Secretariat and will require a restructuring of the administrative architecture of the Secretariat. Figure III (administrative architecture of the global service delivery model) above shows the delineation between headquarters, hub and local functions.

73. The consolidated delivery of end-to-end processes already exists to varying degrees in different duty stations and departments. During the design phase, each department and office shall be required to review its administrative functions in line with the global service delivery model methodology to determine those that are categorized as headquarters, local and location-dependent and therefore retained, and those that are determined as hub or location-independent and are suitable for shared service arrangements. This review would take into account the local specificities of each entity. As the implementation of the global service delivery model progresses, administrative support functions will increasingly be consolidated into shared service centres, as appropriate, thereby allowing departments and offices to focus on their core mandates, and the shared services centres to focus on the delivery of administrative support services that meet the operational requirements of its clients.

74. The case for the United Nations Headquarters in New York, as set out below, has benefitted from the experience and lessons learned from shared services in the Secretariat, as well as best practices.

Current service delivery model

75. Administrative services in New York are provided by offices of the Department of Management and numerous executive and administrative offices. The Department provides headquarters functions and also provides a range of administrative services that are categorized as hub and local. While the Department remains the authority on administrative matters for the Secretariat, various parts of the processes of human resources, finance and central support services have been decentralized, including by delegation of authority to departments and offices. The delivery of services is thus fragmented, with various components delivered by the executive and administrative offices of departments and offices, and other components delivered by offices of the

Department, in addition to their headquarters functions. The accountability for service provision is unclear, as a service may entail a number of different offices having responsibility for specific components of the end-to-end processes. A client will need to contact the different offices to determine the disposition of processing and the client experience can be inconsistent.

Future service delivery model in New York

76. As a prerequisite to the consolidation of location-independent processes globally, a shared services centre in New York will consolidate functions categorized as hub or location-independent. This will entail a reorganization of the various executive and administrative offices of departments that are headquartered in New York and the Department of Management, in line with the global service delivery model methodology. The shared services centre will be organized into service lines representing end-to-end administrative processes. The guiding principles of the service centre will include client servicing and support, evidenced by a single point of entry irrespective of the service being provided or the status of each case; streamlined processes that are complementary to the Umoja workflow; and clear accountability for the end-to-end processes, service delivery and client experience.

77. To achieve the single point of entry, the shared service centre in New York will include a client support desk as the interface and point of entry for the client, irrespective of the issue at hand, and a transaction centre responsible for the processing of transactions. A client board composed of client departments and offices, as well as representatives from the process owners, will be instituted as an advisory and feedback mechanism. Service-level agreements with key performance indicators will be put into force to ensure that the effectiveness of operations is maintained, including a two-tiered service level to respond to both standard and priority requests.

78. Functions identified as local and strategic to the work programme of each department will be retained within each department and office; such support includes, among other things, advice to management, budget formulation, financial management, workforce planning, and coordination of both conflict mediation and administration of justice. In view of the strategic or management nature of the retained functions, it is considered that the retained functions could be integrated into executive direction and management of the department and that the remaining programme support services would be transferred to the shared services centre.

79. To ensure a holistic approach to administrative support services, and in accordance with the changes in job functions, a reprofiling of positions and a realignment of resources will be required. This applies to positions that carry out headquarters functions, shared service functions and retained local functions.

The case for change

80. The fragmentation of service delivery in New York blurs accountabilities, leading to inconsistent service delivery and client experience. The deployment of Umoja created shifts in responsibilities and workload without there being a commensurate redistribution of resources. This has contributed to a reduction in the

level of service in some areas. The service centre will realign resources under a single management structure, such that services can be effectively, efficiently and consistently delivered, with a single point of entry for clients.

81. To achieve the deployment of Umoja in New York, the Headquarters Deployment Group was formed in 2015 by co-locating administrative staff from Secretariat departments and offices headquartered in New York. The Group has played an instrumental role, with operational responsibilities in human resources administration, as well as support responsibilities in other functional areas. The operational component of human resources administration includes the co-location of a pool of staff carrying the Human Resources Partner role in Umoja, with resources temporarily assigned from departments and offices, and is a proof of concept of how fragmented service delivery can be improved through consolidation under a single-service provider.

Implementation plan

82. **Phase 1**. In 2018-2019, and as a prerequisite to the further consolidation of location-independent processes globally, a shared services centre in New York will consolidate functions categorized as "hub". The service centre will be organized into service lines representing end-to-end administrative processes, including, but not limited to, human resources administration and payroll, accounts payable, as well as travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing. Local functions that could benefit from consolidation will also be integrated into the shared services centre, as appropriate. To ensure that the transition to a shared service environment is as seamless as possible and to build on the success of the Headquarters Deployment Group, resources for shared services and client support will be co-located in 2017.

83. **Phase 2**. In 2020-2021, location-independent processes will be aligned with decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model, including consolidation globally into two shared services centres for human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable, subject to the decisions of the General Assembly, with further alignment as the model develops and is implemented across the Secretariat.

Qualitative and quantitative benefits

84. **Qualitative benefits**. The expected benefits of the global service delivery model were articulated by the Secretary-General in paragraph 25 of the framework report and are summarized in section VI.A below. The future service delivery model in New York will provide a single point of entry for administrative support services and client support; further streamline business processes and strengthen accountability for end-to-end processes. As administrative support services are consolidated in New York, the service centre will be in a better position to identify redundancies in work processes and to benefit from economies of scale. As operations are continuously improved, resources will be realigned to enhance the quality of services provided.

85. **Quantitative benefits**. The approach and progress of the analysis of quantitative benefits of the shared services centre in New York are outlined in section VI below and annex III.

VI. Considerations with respect to the global service delivery model

A. Expected benefits

86. The Secretary-General anticipates that the global service delivery model will lead to: greater consistency in the application of regulations, rules, policies and procedures; more timely delivery of services; and increased transparency and accountability through the standardization of processes and centralized oversight. Efficiencies and economies of scale will accrue over time with the redirection of resources to value-added work and new functions.

87. **Qualitative benefits**. As indicated in the framework report, the global service delivery model will enable improvement in the overall administrative service delivery to the Secretariat and response to operational requirements. It will strengthen end-to-end process management for transactional services, with applicable alignment across functional areas; focus on enhanced economy of scale and performance for transactions; improve consistency in quality; increase transparency through the standardization of processes; and reduce the footprint in hardship and hazardous locations.

88. **Quantitative benefits**. Annex III provides the preliminary baseline information and indicative quantitative benefit analysis as at August 2016. As requested by the General Assembly, the Secretariat will continue to gather comprehensive baseline information on the provision of services for each functional area.

89. The Secretary-General presents shared services proposals under the global service delivery model in five areas: human resources administration; payroll; accounts payable; the expansion of shared services to the field; and the consolidation of shared services in New York. The costs and benefits of the global service delivery model will be determined based on each proposal. The present report outlines information on the progress of the analysis of indicative quantitative benefits based on full-time equivalents by proposal area. The organizational design, post requirements and implementation plan for the global consolidation are to be determined during the design phase and proposed in the context of developing the respective budget proposals.

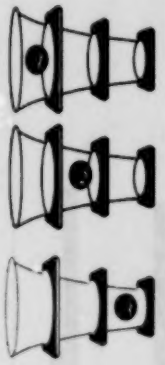
90. While the implementation of shared services results in cost reductions over time based on efficiencies achieved through consolidation, there will be costs related to the design and implementation of shared services, including project costs, and the costs related to affected staff, including training and relocation costs. The need to leverage and retain experience and institutional knowledge will also be an important factor during the implementation of shared services.

91. In view of the above, the detailed costs and quantitative benefits will be included in the respective budget proposals on the basis of the detailed design and implementation plans of each proposal.

B. Location assessment

92. **Approach**. The location assessment follows a three-gate approach. Figure VII outlines the approach.

Figure VII
Location assessment approach



Objective: three-gate approach	Evaluation considerations
Gate 1. Filter large list of locations to a small list for the gate 2 assessment	• Identify minimum requirements for locations based on relevant General Assembly resolutions
Gate 2. Review list of sites generated from the gate 1 filter	• Select set of criteria for which data are relatively easy to obtain through various internal and public sources • Recommend initial phase 1 consolidation locations
Gate 3. Outcome — recommend options for sites for shared service centres	• Review decisions of the General Assembly • In-depth analysis to be conducted during the design phase • Comprehensive set of criteria validated by local representatives to provide sufficient support for a recommendation • Develop and apply criteria weighting conditions • Recommend phase 2 consolidation locations

93. **Gate 1**. The General Assembly, in paragraph 13 of section XIX of its resolution 70/248 A, stressed that the report [on the global service delivery model] should take into account the use of all existing United Nations infrastructure, including that away from Headquarters. On the basis of that guidance, the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee endorsed a phased approach for the location assessment, as follows:

(a) Existing service provider Secretariat locations are to be analysed first, including shared services locations established for field missions;

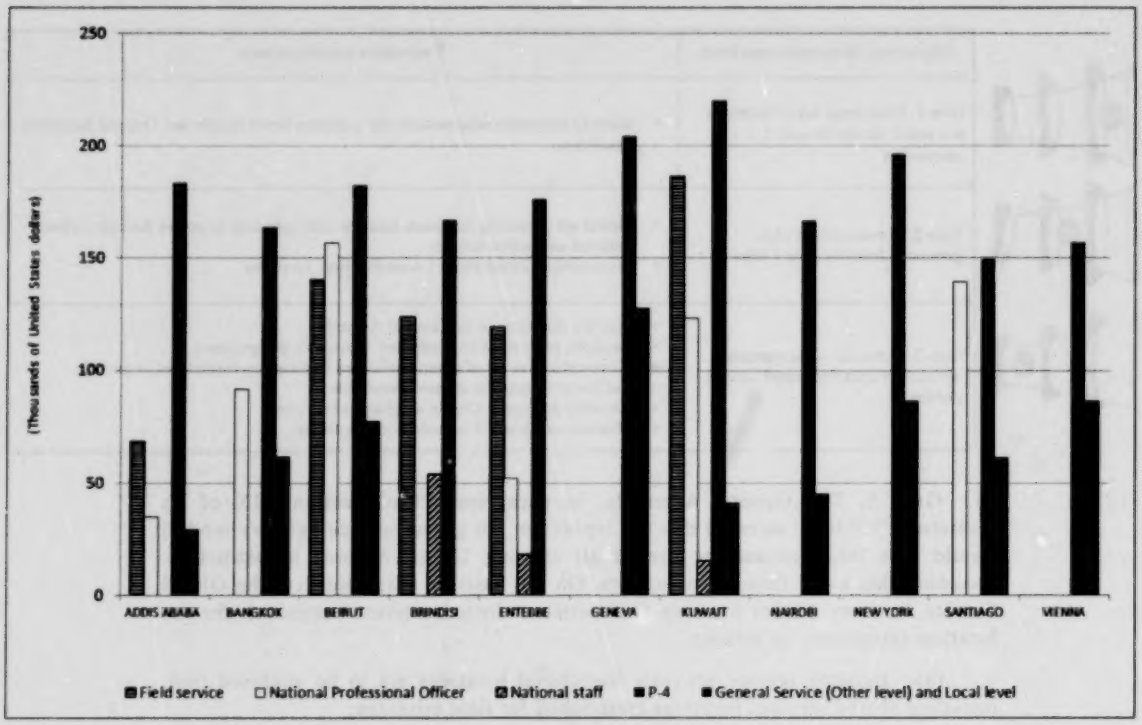
(b) Existing major shared services centres of United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies are to be reviewed in future;

(c) New locations are to be considered only if there is a compelling reason to move from existing locations to a new site.

94. **Gate 2**. A working group was established to assess the following 11 existing Secretariat administrative service providers: United Nations Headquarters (New York), offices away from Headquarters (Nairobi, Geneva and Vienna), regional commissions (Bangkok, Beirut, Addis Ababa and Santiago) and three locations from which shared services are provided for peacekeeping and special political missions (Entebbe, Kuwait and Brindisi, Italy). The criteria, as indicated in paragraph 46 of the framework report, were based largely on those used by the Department of Field Support in the global field support strategy, and included: (a) security and stability; (b) infrastructure, including the capacity to expand the location quickly to accommodate staff without significant new investment; (c) host government relations;

(d) availability of a qualified workforce; (e) staff cost; and (f) health and education. As requested by the General Assembly, staff costs were included as one of the criteria in the evaluation of possible locations for shared services centres. Figure VIII provides a comparative summary of the staff costs[5] across the 11 locations.

Figure VIII
Comparative summary of staff costs



95. The location assessment concluded that the different locations were generally comparable overall, which was to be expected since they are all existing United Nations Secretariat locations that provide administrative services. Specifically, the results demonstrated variance with regard to relations with the host government and education, while being more varied with regard to the security and stability, infrastructure, health and staff costs. The criteria that yielded more variance could thus be utilized to further distinguish the different locations.

[5] Staff costs are based on the initial appropriation rates for the biennium 2016-2017 for Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Santiago and Vienna. Staff costs for Kuwait are based on the standard rates used in the 2016 budget for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. Staff costs for Entebbe and Brindisi are based on the standard rates used in their respective budgets for 2016-2017. All rates exclude the vacancy factor and staff assessment.

96. To determine the locations for the phase 1 initial consolidation in 2018-2019, account was taken of the views of the Advisory Committee, as reflected in paragraph 19 above, that the global service delivery model should aim to achieve the most rational distribution of functions among different locations, the most effective use of the existing Secretariat infrastructure and investments made, and also draw upon experience and lessons learned from existing shared services arrangements, as well as the three parameters described in paragraph 20 above. In view of the foregoing, initial consolidation into six duty stations of main administrative service providers is proposed in 2018-2019 in order to leverage existing capacity in major regions during the transition phase.

97. **Gate 3**. To arrive at locations to be proposed for shared services centres in phase 2 of the global service delivery model in 2020-2021, the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee agreed to further refine the location assessment on the basis of guidance from the General Assembly and on a cost-versus-risk methodology.

C. Reporting and funding arrangements for shared services

98. Shared services centres require predictable funding to ensure that services can be delivered according to service-level agreements, complemented by scalable funding to respond to fluctuations in workload in a business-appropriate time frame. On the basis of lessons learned from the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, the financing model can have a significant impact on management and performance, as well as on accountability. In particular, the shared services centres should have their own budgets and clear reporting lines. The model should be simple and cost-effective to administer and allow for ease of transition from the current service delivery funding arrangements. In view of this, it is proposed that the resource requirements of the shared services centres be funded from the assessed budgets of the Organization and extrabudgetary resources based on the workload attributable to activities financed from the respective budgets, complemented by cost-recovery for pre-defined services or volume that fall outside of the scope of the respective budgets.

99. For the purpose of ensuring transparency and accountability of the new shared services centres, it is intended that a new subsection of Section 29 of the programme budget will be created. The distinct subsection will allow for the presentation of the resources for global shared services and a single reporting structure to the project owner. Other assessed resources of the service centres will be presented to Member States for approval through the respective budgets.

100. For the initial consolidation in the biennium 2018-2019, transitional arrangements will be put in place. As a lesson learned from the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, the timelines for phasing in the model and the build-up of staffing needs to be commensurate with the accountability for agreed outcomes. The establishment of new shared services centres and client support desks will be considered for inclusion under a new subsection of Section 29 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, in line with the proposals put forth in the present report. The Under-Secretary-General for Management will be responsible for the development of shared services and accountable for the resources of the new shared services subsection. The heads of administration of the

offices away from Headquarters and the regional commissions, as appropriate, will have dual reporting to their heads of office and the Under-Secretary-General for Management for the delivery of administrative services at their respective locations, in line with their delegated authority. The Regional Service Centre in Entebbe will continue with its approved funding and reporting arrangements. The experience and lessons learned from the funding model of the Regional Service Centre will be taken into account in the further development of funding arrangements for Secretariat-wide shared services.

101. The global service delivery model project and governance arrangements, as described in section VII.C below, will ensure that client entities are an active partner in the development of model, and are closely involved in the establishment and monitoring of service-level agreements and key performance indicators for the delivery of shared services.

102. In the biennium 2020-2021, two shared services centres at locations yet to be determined will provide Secretariat-wide shared services for human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable. In line with the further development of the global service delivery model, shared services centres will also carry out other location-independent functions.

103. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/248 A, any changes to the existing and future service delivery model must be approved by the Assembly. In this regard, any proposed changes to the biennial programme plan for 2018-2019 will be submitted for consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its next session. Proposed changes to resources will be included in the respective proposed budgets, including the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 and the proposed budgets for peacekeeping and the support account for peacekeeping operations.

D. Assessment of proposals against the guiding principles of the global service delivery model

104. The project team has regularly assessed the global service delivery model proposals being developed against the direction outlined in the sections IV and V of the framework report. The proposed model has the following characteristics when compared with the global service delivery model guiding principles:

(a) **Excellence of service**. The global service delivery model provides the opportunity to provide high quality services that are delivered consistently on time and within cost, and to optimize operations through specialization, simplification and consolidation. It will leverage available expertise and institutional knowledge and benefit from existing infrastructure and capacity;

(b) **Client orientation and responsiveness to business needs**. A single point of entry for clients is proposed. To achieve this, shared services centres will be designed with front and back offices, with the front office as the point of entry for the client, and the back office responsible for the processing of transactions. Client support desks will focus on providing client service. Service-level agreements with key performance indicators will be used to measure that service delivery meets clients' requirements;

(c) **Adaptability, flexibility and scalability**. Consolidating transactional functions allows the Secretariat to quickly adopt changes in strategic direction or respond to clients at a global and/or regional level. Managing staff in the shared services centres, rather than across many organizational structures, enables greater visibility into volume forecasting, as well as opportunities for specialization among staff. Scalable funding mechanisms will enable the centres to respond to increases or decreases in supply and demand;

(d) **Effective organizational performance management**. Service will be delivered within a defined performance framework. Service-level agreements with key performance indicators will be developed that can be used to effectively monitor performance against established performance measures. Regular performance reporting will aid effective oversight and increase the overall transparency of performance. Performance will also be reported to the General Assembly through the established results-based-budgeting frameworks and performance reporting mechanisms;

(e) **Adding value in a simplified and consolidated administrative support structure**. The shared services centres will report to the global service delivery model project owner, and will have functional reporting lines to the process owners, resulting in reduced fragmentation of administrative service delivery. For 2018-2019, existing reporting lines for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, as endorsed by the General Assembly, will remain, and the heads of administration of the offices away from Headquarters and the regional commissions, as appropriate, will have dual reporting to their head of office and the Under-Secretary-General for Management for the delivery of administrative support services at their respective locations, in line with their delegated authority. A client board or boards, composed of representatives from client departments and offices and process owners, will be instituted as an important mechanism to establish and adjust service-level agreements and to monitor the effectiveness of operations.

E. Risk framework

105. The Secretary-General, in paragraph 43 of the framework report, indicated that, as part of the enterprise risk management approach of the Secretariat, the global service delivery model had been included in the overall risk profile of the Organization. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 36 of its report (A/70/436), considered that "the implementation of a new service delivery model will have a significant impact on organizational structures of the United Nations Secretariat, lines of accountability, working methods, processes and procedures". To fully evaluate the appropriate risk tolerances of different clients and operational contexts of a global, but differentiated global service delivery model, particularly in field environments, a risk framework is being developed.

106. **Methodology**. The implementation of the global service delivery model is a complex initiative with inherent risks, the understanding and managing of which constitutes an important aspect of the global service delivery model. The overall level of risk and complexity is based on numerous factors, including the number of personnel affected, the size of the Organization, the complexity and scope of the processes to be transitioned and many other considerations. As outlined in his report

entitled "Towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat" (A/64/640), the Secretary-General provided a systematic risk-based approach to management decisions and risk mitigation. The project team will use the enterprise risk management framework to guide the identification, mitigation and reporting of risks and issues associated with global service delivery model during the design and implementation of the new service delivery model. The enterprise risk management framework will be tailored, as appropriate, drawing upon experience and knowledge within the Secretariat and upon lessons learned system-wide.

107. **Risk management**. Risk management is a coordinated activity to direct and control an organization with regard to risk. It is a continuous systematic process of identifying and controlling risks in all activities according to a set of preconceived parameters by applying appropriate management policies and procedures. Risk management for the global service delivery model will be informed by observations in various reports of the oversight bodies, for example: (a) the need to clearly assign ownership of project risks to those with the authority to address such risks; (b) the need to assess and document the likelihood of the occurrence of each risk, including quantified impacts; (c) the need to establish regular risk monitoring as part of the ongoing budgeting and resourcing arrangements; (d) the need to quantify risk financially or in terms of the potential impact on the project timeline; and (e) the need to track the average age of unresolved project risks not yet mitigated and unresolved project risks actively in mitigation.

108. Learning from the lessons above and subject to the approval of the General Assembly, capacity within the project team will be created to manage activities such as conducting risk management planning, risk identification, risk analysis; developing responses to risks and monitoring; and controlling risk controls to support effective, risk-based decision-making.

109. **Recording and monitoring**. The global risk register for the global service delivery model will be operational at the commencement of the project design phase and will be managed centrally. The continuous monitoring and updating of the risk register will be the responsibility of the project management team.

VII. Implementation of the global service delivery model

A. Summary of implementation

110. The timeline for the implementation of the global service delivery model will follow a phased approach from strategy to operations and review. All stages will incorporate structured programme management, integrated communications, and change and risk management. A summary of the implementation of the service delivery proposals is set out in figure IX below.

Figure IX
Service delivery implementation summary

Years	*Location*	*Description*
Phase 1: 2018-2019	Secretariat-wide	Human resources administration, payroll and vendor claims will be consolidated into six duty stations of main administrative service providers — New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, Entebbe and Bangkok. Client support desks will be set up in the six duty stations, as well as Santiago, Beirut and Addis Ababa. Transition and preparatory work for Phase 2.
	25 field missions currently not supported by the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe	Transfer of the missions to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe or other site will be done incrementally taking into consideration several factors, such as organizational and data readiness, geographical proximity, mission size, field missions budget cycles and phase of a mission (start-up, steady state, drawdown), with the primary objective of ensuring service quality, operational continuity and the most effective transition possible.
	New York	As a prerequisite to further consolidation of location-independent processes globally, the shared services centre in New York will consolidate functions categorized as "hub". The service centre will be organized into service lines representing the end-to-end administrative processes, including and not limited to human resources administration and payroll, accounts payable, as well as travel management, travel claims and ticket payment processing. Local functions that could benefit from consolidation will also be integrated into the shared services centre.
Phase 2: 2020-2021	Secretariat-wide	Human resources administration, payroll and vendor claims will be consolidated in two shared services centres. The locations are yet to be determined. Procurement and travel are also being considered for consolidation at this time.

B. Change management and impact on staff

111. As with many other major reform initiatives, the success of the implementation of the global service delivery model will depend on strong leadership, dedicated change management and open and transparent communications. The key building blocks of successful change management include change vision, leadership alignment, stakeholder engagement, change impact assessment, communications, culture change, workforce transition, training and adaptation. Subject to the approval of the General Assembly, dedicated capacity within the global service delivery model project team will be created to further develop a change management strategy during the design and implementation of the global service delivery model.

112. **Activities during the design phase**. The first step in change management will be to communicate a clear vision for change and build the support for this vision among key stakeholders. A detailed stakeholder assessment will be conducted to determine the level of impact and need for engagement. Based on this assessment, the communication plan will be reviewed to facilitate the building of awareness, understanding, support and commitment to the implementation of the global service delivery model. During this process, the project team will perform a change impact assessment, gathering information from various sources, including surveys, interviews, staff focus groups and management interviews. As a result of the change impact assessment, the team will be able to:

(a) Identify enablers and barriers to change;

(b) Provide a clear picture of the change impact on the Secretariat, allowing for the right level of attention and focus;

(c) Identify potential change champions;

(d) Establish a change network;

(e) Identify clear activities to support implementation;

(f) Plan for mitigating identified risks;

(g) Plan for necessary activities to educate the Secretariat on the global service delivery model.

113. The outcomes of the change impact assessment will form the basis for an updated change management strategy, which will outline specific actions to proactively manage the change process and the anticipated impact on staff.

114. While the specific impact on individual posts cannot be determined at the time of the present report, the proposed establishment of shared services centres will affect staff to varying degrees. Some administrative capacity will become redundant after consolidation within and across duty stations, while other administrative functions may change and thus require staff to learn new or different skill sets.

115. To address these changes, the Secretariat will take the utmost care with the development of solid workforce planning. This will entail the reprofiling of positions and training of staff, so that they can be transitioned to new functions, as well as the training of new recruits. Existing positions, including types and duration

of contracts, and forthcoming retirements will be carefully reviewed and monitored to determine staff requirements in order to identify potential gaps. In addition, a comprehensive workload and post analysis for local, hub and headquarters functions will be conducted to identify requirements for all components of the global service delivery model. While the new requirements based on reprofiling or new capacities are determined, a recruitment freeze will be considered for the affected General Service and Field Service positions, to the extent necessary. In addition, a request for the exceptional lifting of the limitations on the transfer of General Service staff to other duty stations may be considered. Throughout this process, management will stay engaged in active dialogue with staff representatives to ensure that the utmost consideration is applied to minimize the negative impact on staff and to ensure transparency.

116. The importance of open communication cannot be underscored enough during such an important change initiative. The communications toolkit will include key messages composed of critical information that stakeholders need along each implementation stage and will make use of the most effective communication vehicles for those messages. The main aim of the communications approach is to provide the necessary information and ensure mechanisms for feedback. Typical features of this plan include the organization of regular town halls, the development of a dedicated Intranet site, the ongoing distribution of broadcast e-mails and mechanisms to provide feedback.

C. Project management

117. In his framework report, the Secretary-General outlined that the governance arrangements for the global service delivery model will be designed to ensure that client entities are an active partner in the decision-making process and are closely involved in the monitoring of organizational performance. The Advisory Committee, in paragraph 11 of its report (A/70/436), recalled that lessons from the implementation of several major transformational initiatives show that strong leadership and effective project governance are essential to successfully manage and deliver a complex, organization-wide business, transformation, such as the shift to a new service delivery model. In addition, the Advisory Committee emphasized that the members of the Steering Committee should play an active role in guiding and overseeing the management of the development and implementation of the project, in representing the views and needs of their respective areas and in fostering cooperation across the Organization, as well as in facilitating decision-making and the prompt resolution of issues.

Governance

118. During the assessment phase of the global service delivery model project, an effective project governance model was put in place. The detailed planning and execution of the project was the responsibility of the global service delivery model project team, which reports to the Under-Secretary-General for Management as project owner. The Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee, chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Management and vice-chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, is composed of members from offices away

from Headquarters, regional commissions and various departments and offices at the head of office level. The Steering Committee is a key component of the visioning and consultative process. In addition, the Steering Committee serves as a forum for consultation and advice for the perspectives of stakeholders and clients. In turn, the project owner reports regularly to the senior management through the Management Committee.

119. **Steering Committee**. The Steering Committee provides strategic guidance and project oversight. The responsibilities include: (a) deciding vision, structure and policy issues; (b) examining and providing strategic guidance to the project owner on recommendations presented by the project team; (c) monitoring the progress of the design and implementation of the global service delivery model and exercising oversight responsibility; and (d) ensuring coordination of the global service delivery model with other ongoing transformation initiatives.

Components of the global service delivery model project

120. **Process owners**. Four senior managers have been identified as global service delivery model process owners for their respective thematic areas. They include: (a) the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management; (b) the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, Controller; (c) the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services; and (d) the Director, Logistics Support Division, Department of Field Support. Process owners act as principal change agents for end-to-end, cross-functional processes in their respective areas. Process owners have the following indicative responsibilities:

(a) To ensure that the required oversight and accountability arrangements are put in place for their respective areas of responsibility;

(b) To identify organizational issues and challenges for their areas of responsibility relating to the global service delivery model (including authorization levels, segregation of duties and levels of delegation) and propose appropriate remedial action;

(c) To ensure that the development of a global service delivery model within the Secretariat is anchored in a coherent approach that takes into account all ongoing business transformation initiatives;

(d) To ensure that the global service delivery model draws fully upon the experience and expertise acquired, lessons learned and best practices in the implementation and use of shared services within the Secretariat and the United Nations system;

(e) To map, in consultation with the project team, processes for migration to a shared service environment;

(f) To develop independent mechanisms for assessing and reporting on the quality of services provided and the extent to which client needs are being met;

(g) To collect baseline information on the provision of services across the processes they lead, under existing service delivery arrangements prior to the implementation of the global service delivery model.

121. **Service provider**. Service providers provide input into detailed assessment for the global service delivery model, including business case and location assessment.

122. **Client**. Clients provide input as requested by the service providers, process owners and the project team. With respect to processes identified as having hub potential, clients identify service level requirements and the risk to mandate delivery of disruption or delays to service delivery. Clients have also provided input on the functions and responsibilities to be retained within respective departments and offices.

123. **Working groups**. Thematic/end-to-end functional working groups representing client departments and offices, service providers and process owners develop, in coordination with the project team, the detailed analysis in order to determine the service delivery model, scope of services, location, economies of scale and return on investments. Proposals generated by the expanded project team are reviewed by the process owners and submitted to the Steering Committee and the Management Committee.

124. **Client board**. For subsequent phases of the project, one or more client boards will ensure an institutional link with user departments and offices during design and implementation. This will serve as a mechanism for two-way communication and help to embed the global service delivery model project as a Secretariat-wide endeavour.

125. **Project management team**. A small project team was established in 2016 on a temporary basis within existing resources to lead the assessment of the global service delivery model business case. This team was supported by specialized consultancy capacity with expertise in shared services arrangements, service delivery models and change management.

126. In line with the observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on other major projects, dedicated project management capacity is requested to manage the detailed design and execution of the project. Subject to approval of the necessary resources, the project management team will:

(a) Integrate the current project plan to capture all the activities and related activities to be undertaken by the project team, consultants and the wider Secretariat;

(b) Include in the design project plan elements that enable the capture and reporting of detailed project cost, timetable forecasting and control of risks, including appropriate scenario and contingency planning;

(c) Track project efforts against estimated and actual delivery, providing an estimated breakdown of the work involved by task;

(d) Ensure that monitoring and reporting processes are in place in order to provide regular status updates and better support to decision-making across project activities, including the General Assembly, the Management Committee, the Steering Committee and senior management;

(e) Lead activities related to the design and implementation of the global service delivery model, including organizational redesign and implementation

planning for human resources administration, payroll, accounts payable, the shared services centre in New York and the expansion of shared services to the field;

(f) Establish, in consultation with stakeholders, the performance framework, including service level agreements and key performance indicators;

(g) Prepare a change management strategy and communications toolkit, as outlined in Section VII.B above;

(h) Manage activities such as conducting risk management planning, risk identification, risk analysis, developing responses to risks and monitoring and controlling risk controls to support effective, risk-based decision-making, as outlined in section VI.E above;

(i) Establish client relationship management mechanisms for the global service delivery model.

127. As emphasized by the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 10 of its report (A/70/436), the project team will use a project tool that allows for project plans to be managed by working groups and consolidated by the global service delivery model project management team. The team will review progress against planned activities, assess risks and note their proposed or potential mitigation, and produce regular status reports.

128. In addition, the implementation of the global service delivery model may require technologies that will allow the Secretariat to improve the timeliness, quality and cost-effectiveness of shared services provided to clients. Service centres may need solutions to manage client relationships from the very first contact, helping clients navigate to the appropriate service provider, through highly effective client portals that leverage virtual assistants and knowledge base. The design phase of the global service delivery model will include a detailed study with a view to building an end-to-end service management platform. The study will include elements such as: (a) the identification of what technologies leading organizations use for service delivery; and (b) the identification of the business needs.

129. Annex I provides the current governance framework of the global service delivery model. The terms of reference and composition of the Steering Committee will be reviewed and expanded to include broader representation of client departments and offices, including additional regional commissions, during the design phase, and the terms of reference and composition of the client board or boards will be developed, to reflect the agreed actions and inputs necessary for the design and implementation of the global service delivery model within the Secretariat.

VIII. Resource implications

130. To continue to develop the detailed global service delivery model, as outlined in the present report, the Secretary-General requires temporary resources to establish a project management team for model. The project management team, assisted by specialized consultancy services, will lead all activities related to the detailed design and implementation of the various proposals in the present paper, and support all activities related to the ongoing assessment of processes categorized as hub.

131. Under the overall direction of the project owner, the project management team ensures close coordination with all key stakeholders, including the Steering Committee and the various working groups, and is responsible for reporting to intergovernmental and expert bodies and senior management.

132. To carry out the broad range of functions indicated in the report, including, but not limited to, project management, including change management and communications, the thematic and organizational design of human resources administration, payroll, accounts payable, the shared services centre in New York and the expansion of shared services to the field, the development of a performance framework and the continued collection and analysis of baseline and performance data, it is proposed that the project management team be composed of a Principal Officer at the D-1 level, one Senior Programme Officer at the P-5 level, five P-4 Management Officers and one General Service (Other level). The project organizational structure and post distribution for 2017 is set out in annex II.

133. The project management team for the period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 would entail additional resources requirements of $1,708,600, comprising general temporary assistance (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 5 P-4 and 1 GS(OL)) ($1,597,200), and related amounts for information technology ($25,160), communications ($5,240), supplies ($4,000) for the above-mentioned positions, and estimated requirements of $77,000 would provide for travel of the project management team related to the design of shared services centres and the location assessment.

134. Requirements for consultancy services with expertise in shared services and change management to support the continued assessment, analysis and development of the global service delivery model, in particular during the design phase, will be covered within existing resources.

Cost-sharing arrangements

135. Similar to Umoja, as the global service delivery model encompasses administrative support services across the Secretariat, due consideration has been given to the appropriate channels of funding for the project, as its financing should not be solely restricted to the regular budget. In this connection, it is proposed that the global service delivery model be financed from among the main sources of funds, namely the regular budget, peacekeeping and extrabudgetary resources, in the same percentages that were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/262 for Umoja, as follows: 15 per cent from the regular budget; 62 per cent from the support account for peacekeeping operations; and 23 per cent from the special accounts for programme support costs.

136. Under the arrangement above, the estimated requirements for 2017 would be distributed as indicated in the table below.

Summary of proposed resource requirements to be approved by the General Assembly for 2017, by source of funding

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Source of funds	*Proposed requirements 2017*	*Percentage*
Regular budget	256.3	15
Support account for peacekeeping operations	1 059.3	62
Extrabudgetary	393.0	23
Total	**1 708.6**	**100**

IX. Recommended action to be taken by the General Assembly

137. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) To take note of the report of the Secretary-General;

(b) To invite the Secretary-General to include detailed proposals for the implementation of phase 1 in the respective budgets for 2018-2019, as outlined in the present report;

(c) To request the Secretary-General to continue to develop the global service delivery model for implementation in 2020-2021, including the locations of the service centres, taking into account the guidance of the General Assembly, and to report on progress at the main part of the seventy-second session;

Programme budget

(d) To appropriate an amount of $256,300 under the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 under section 29A, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management, representing the regular budget share until 31 December 2017, which would represent a charge against the contingency fund for the biennium 2016-2017;

Support account for peacekeeping operations

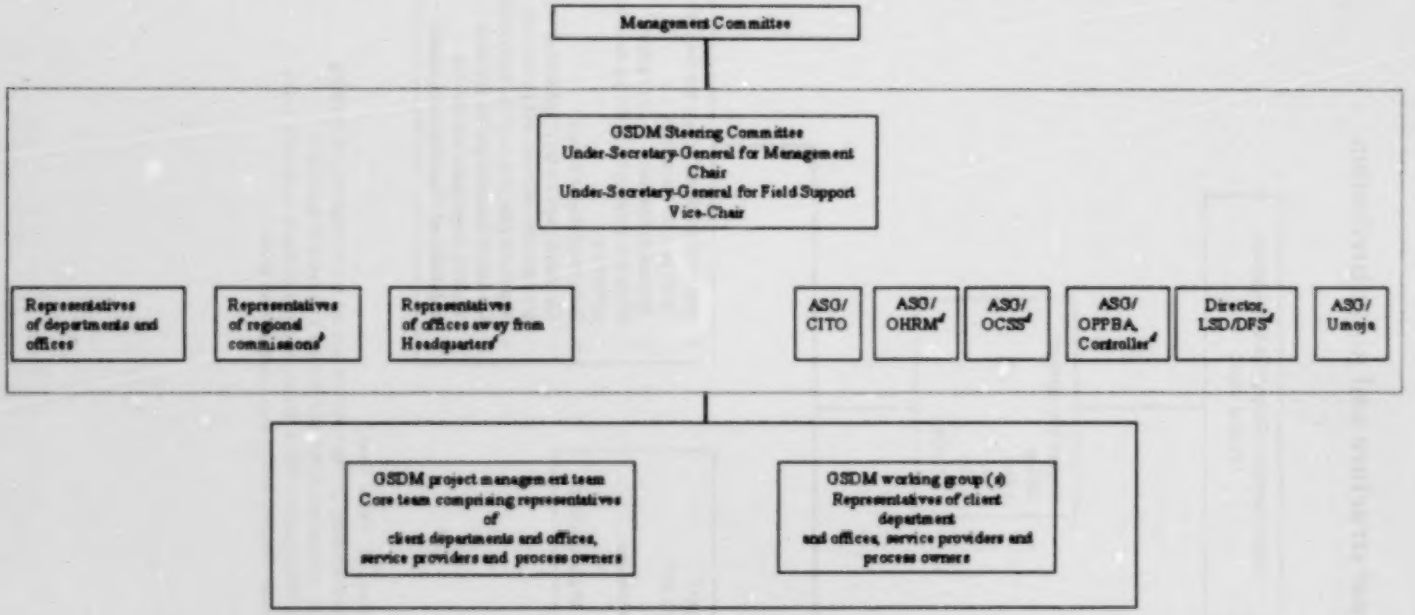
(e) To note that resource requirements in the amount of $1,059,300 will be included in the subsequent requirements for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the financial period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018;

Extrabudgetary resources

(f) To note that requirements in the amount of $393,000 will be funded from extrabudgetary resources in the financial period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

Annex I

Current governance framework of the global service delivery model



Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; CITO, Chief Information Technology Officer; DFS, Department of Field Support; GSDM, global service delivery model; LSD, Logistics Support Division; OCSS, Office of Central Support Services; OHRM, Office of Human Resources Management; OPPBA, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts; Umoja, Secretariat-wide enterprise resource planning solution.

Note: The terms of reference and composition of the Steering Committee will be reviewed and expanded to include broader representation of client departments and offices, including additional regional commissions, during the design phase.

[a] Includes: Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management; Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator; United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; Under-Secretary-General for Public Information; Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme; and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

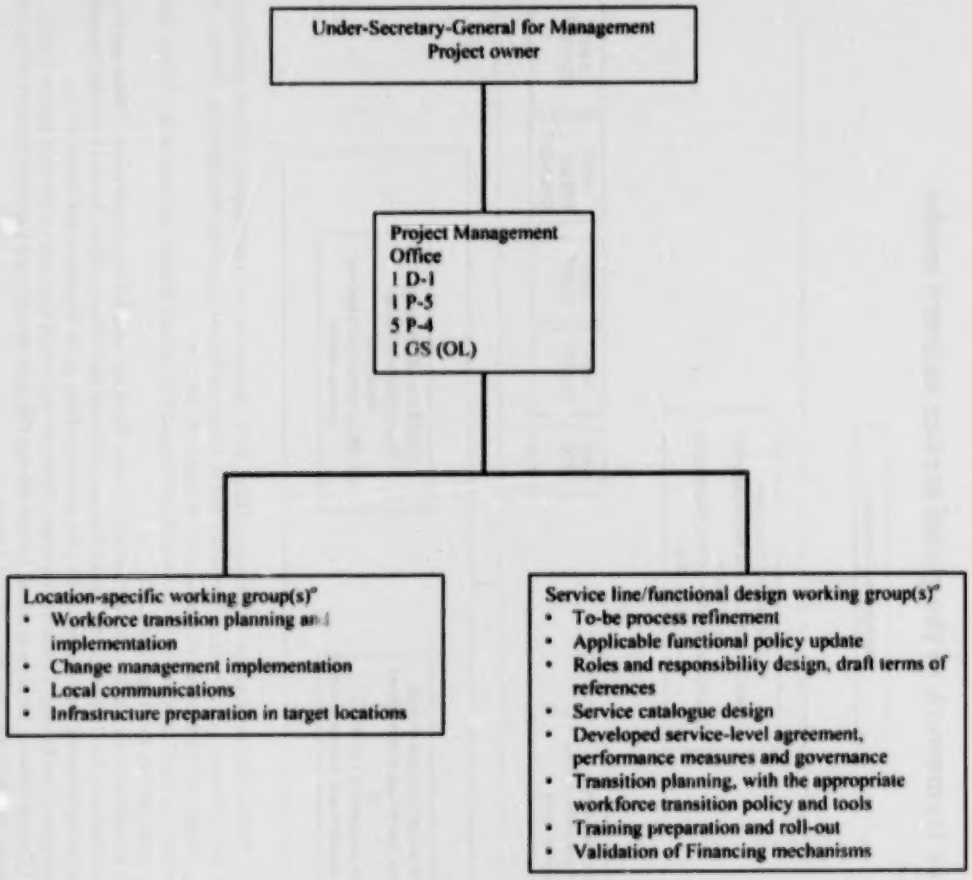
[b] Includes: Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe; Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

[c] Includes: Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva; Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi; and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.

[d] Member of the Steering Committee is also designated as a global service delivery model process owner.

Annex II

Project organizational structure and post distribution for 2017


Under-Secretary-General for Management
Project owner
Project Management Office
1 D-1
1 P-5
5 P-4
1 GS (OL)
Location-specific working group(s)[a]
• Workforce transition planning and implementation
• Change management implementation
• Local communications
• Infrastructure preparation in target locations
Service line/functional design working group(s)[a]
• To-be process refinement
• Applicable functional policy update
• Roles and responsibility design, draft terms of references
• Service catalogue design
• Developed service-level agreement, performance measures and governance
• Transition planning, with the appropriate workforce transition policy and tools
• Training preparation and roll-out
• Validation of Financing mechanisms

Abbreviations: GS, General Service; OL, Other level.

[a] Thematic/end-to-end functional working group(s) and/or subject matter experts representing client departments and offices, service providers and process owners will develop in coordination with the Project Management Office design-specific changes to process, roles and responsibilities, governance structure and change management plans.

Annex III

Baseline information on the global service delivery model

1. The General Assembly, in paragraph 9 of section XIX of its resolution 70/248 A, requested the Secretary-General to gather information to support the business case for the global service delivery model, including, among other things, comprehensive baseline information on the provision of services for each process. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in paragraph 27 of its report (A/70/436, indicated that the baseline information should include such elements as volume of activity, the locations from which the service is provided, the related resources, including staffing resources, and estimates of unit costs.

2. As indicated in paragraph 9 of the present report, the 201 processes identified as location-independent (part 1 of the six-part methodology) were assessed for the business impact and difficulty of moving the processes to a shared service environment (part 2 of the six-part methodology). Based on the assessment, the recommendations of the process owners, as well as leading practices in shared services, the Global Service Delivery Model Steering Committee, endorsed the three end-to-end process initiatives: human resources administration and payroll; procurement and accounts payable; and travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing. In addition, two management initiatives were endorsed: the expansion of shared services to the field; and the consolidation of services within existing duty stations.

3. The Steering Committee endorsed a phased approach, with a transition phase of initial consolidation in 2018-2019 (phase 1) in order to achieve the end-state in 2020-2021 (phase 2). Taking into account the views of the Advisory Committee in its report (A/70/436), that the global service delivery model should aim to achieve the most rational distribution of functions among different locations, the most effective use of the existing Secretariat infrastructure and investments made, and also draw upon experience and iessons learned from existing shared services arrangements, the initial consolidation into six duty stations of main administrative service providers will be undertaken in 2018-2019, in order to leverage existing capacity in major regions during the transition phase.

4. To ensure a consistent approach, three parameters were established for the initial consolidation in 2018-2019: (a) redistribute workload within the same time zone to the extent possible, taking into account local specificities; (b) redeploy resources across duty stations only if the receiving duty station is unable to absorb the additional workload within existing resources; and (c) mitigate any movement of resources that would result in increased costs.

5. The project team, with the support of specialized consultants and working groups for each of the initiatives, analysed the three end-to-end process initiatives and determined elements such as the volume of transactional activity, the locations

from which the service is provided, indicative full-time equivalents (FTEs),[a] and estimates of quantitative benefits. A FTE analysis estimates the work effort for a given volume of activity or activities, based on consistently applied work effort assumptions. A FTE analysis is not a review of specific positions or funding sources, nor is it a review of individual staff encumbering positions. The review of specific positions will be carried out in the context of the respective budget proposals in the coming months for those locations affected in the first phase of implementation of the global service delivery model in 2018-2019.

Proposals for consideration of the General Assembly

6. Progress on the analysis of baseline data as at August 2016 is contained in the present annex for human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable, as well as the two management initiatives on the expansion of shared services to the field and the consolidation of services within existing duty stations, as it relates to New York. The baseline data related to procurement, travel, travel claims and ticket payments remain under assessment.

7. To quantify the indicative quantitative benefits of global consolidation of human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable, the project team identified three contributing elements, namely:

(a) The targeting of efficiency gains resulting from the consolidation of end-to-end processes in two locations in 2020-2021; a target-efficient gain of 15 per cent of the total number of FTEs consolidated has been used, based on experience and benchmarks;[b]

(b) The redeployment of FTE from one duty station to another will be determined during the global service delivery model design phase. To provide an indicative estimate of quantitative benefits in the present report, a 15 per cent reduction has been applied assuming lower staff costs;

(c) The reprofiling, reclassification and the number of positions required will be determined during the organizational design for phase 2 implementation in 2020-2021.

[a] In this context, the term FTE is used to convert the hours worked by several staff performing specific functions on a part-time basis into the hours worked by a full-time employee. In other words, one FTE is equivalent to one staff member working full-time. For example: 3 staff members spend 30 hours, 20 hours, and 10 hours per week respectively on a specific function, totalling 60 hours. Assuming a full-time employee works 35 hours per week; a full-time equivalent calculation is 60 hours divided by 35 hours, or 1.7 FTE. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that a FTE analysis estimates work hours of specific types of work, such as processing of transactions in Umoja, and may not reflect related activities, such as supervisory, client support and monitoring functions.

[b] As part of the report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/69/751/Rev.1), the Secretary-General reported that a 10-15 per cent reduction of full-time equivalents is achievable in relation to the global field support strategy.

A. Human resources administration

Introduction

8. The future shared service centres will deliver high quality, timely and standardized administrative services across the global Secretariat for human resources administration. The administrative support functions will be organized to put client needs, operational imperatives and results first, while also ensuring appropriate control, oversight and cost-effectiveness. Specialization at each level of the Organization will allow for greater concentration of expertise and consistency of administrative services.

9. The global service delivery model for human resources administration consists of the components outlined in section V.A. of the present report.

10. The following FTE analysis only focuses on requirements for the transaction activities and does not include work effort related to national staff and individual uniformed personnel of peacekeeping and special political missions (Umoja cluster 5), except for the General Service staff of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). (Note: The total may not add up owing to rounding).

Baseline current state summary: human resources administration volume and full-time equivalent, by location

Area	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Kuwait*	*Other*	*Unassigned*[a]	*Total*
Number of staff payrolled	7 452[b]	5 393	1 251	2 158	799	777	382	585		8 014		Not applicable	**26 811**
Processing FTE based on volume of human resources transactions	66	45	14	18	6	5	2	3	24	14	69	92	**358**

[a] Approximately 82 FTEs estimated for consultants and individual contractors, as well as 10 other FTEs, could not be mapped to locations.

[b] Includes the administration for all duty stations of short-term language staff, staff on when actually employed (WAE) contracts, staff that are providing services pro bono and non-staff that receive compensation through payroll, such as judges, the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). The international staff of field missions is payrolled by New York, but reflected in the table under Entebbe, Kuwait and Other.

11. FTE analysis and estimations are based on two elements: (a) transaction volumes related to the different human resources administration transactions (Umoja and non-Umoja, i.e., offer management in Inspira) that the transaction centre will process; and (b) work effort estimates required to carry out the transactions. FTE estimations assume fully trained, experienced and proficient human resources capacity, at the G-6/G-7 level.

Baseline future state summary: proposed human resources administration full-time equivalent migration during phases 1 and 2, by location

Period	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Kuwait*	*Other*	*Unassigned*	*Total*
Current	66	45	14	18	6	5	2	3	24	14	69	92	**358**
2018-2019*	66[a]	45	14	25[b]	9[c]	*	*	*	76[d]	14	–	92	**341[a]**
2020-2021	Locations to be determined												**290**

[a] Excludes 17 FTEs from MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia, which are subject to decisions of the Security Council.

[b] Increase is attributable to the equivalent to the work effort associated with 5 FTEs from ECA and 2 from ESCWA.

[c] Increase is attributable to the equivalent to the work effort associated with 3 FTEs from ECLAC.

[d] Increase is attributable to the equivalent to the work effort associated with the field consolidation as outlined at section V.E.

* The workload distribution and the client support desks for Addis Ababa, Beirut and Santiago, as well as the required managerial/supervisory structure, will be developed in the context of the organizational design for 2018-2019.

Baseline future state summary: calculation of the potential human resources administration quantitative benefit

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Human resource administration indicative quantitative benefits	*Total FTE*	*Consolidation 15 per cent efficiency gain through consolidation into shared service centres*[a]	*Location 15 per cent reduction assuming lower staff costs*	*Total indicative estimated benefits*
2018-2019	341[b]	–	–	–
2020-2021	290	2 840.5	2 422.8	5 263.3
Total efficiency gain on FTE	**51**			

[a] Calculation baseline is the current total annual cost of the FTEs, $19,939,000.

[b] Excludes 17 FTEs from MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia, which are subject to decisions of the Security Council.

12. The overall number and volume of transactions are assumed to remain the same. In addition to the above estimates, cost reductions may result from: (a) a leaner management structure as a result of the consolidation of transactions in shared centres; and (b) the elimination of duplication of efforts in terms of policy interpretation at different sites; and the consolidation of human resources administration end-to-end processing.

B. Payroll

Introduction

13. Payroll activities are currently delivered in a partially consolidated manner by teams in 10 locations (following the implementation of Umoja cluster 5, which consolidates the payroll of national staff and of uniformed personnel in field missions into two centres in Entebbe and Kuwait City) without decentralized local activities. Further consolidation and alignment with human resources administration and the global service delivery model will improve end-to-end processing, and will provide for the establishment of common client service desks, providing a one-stop shop for staff members and resulting in enhanced client satisfaction.

14. The following FTE analysis captures the workload of the current payroll teams. The FTE requirements for client support desks and the required managerial/supervisory structure shall be determined during the design phase of the global service delivery model.

15. The figures shown below do not yet reflect Entebbe and Kuwait City as it will be in November 2016 as the result of the implementation of Umoja cluster 5. The figures for Entebbe reflect the workforce currently required to support the payroll of national staff and individual uniformed personnel of the field missions already administered through Entebbe prior to cluster 5. It is noted that the FTE calculation for payroll is quite linear, as most staff handling payroll tasks are dedicated 100 per cent (or 50 per cent, in a few cases) to payroll activities.

Baseline current state summary: payroll volume and full-time equivalent, by location

Area	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Total*
Number of payrolled staff and uniformed personnel	14 556	5 393	1 251	2 158	799	777	382	585	11 300	**37 201**
Processing FTE	23.5	8.5	4	8.5	3.5	4	1	1	22	**76**

16. The impact that the payroll consolidation suggested for phases 1 and 2 would have on the allocation of FTE resources is reflected below. For phase 1, in 2018-2019, it is also noted that the workload of one FTE is expected to be moved from New York to Bangkok to administer the worldwide payroll area of short-term language staff, thus avoiding an increase of required FTE resources in New York as the result of the consolidation of payroll services from Santiago to New York.

Baseline future state summary: proposed payroll full-time equivalent migration during phases 1 and 2, by location

Period	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Total*
Current	23.5	8.5	4	8.5	3.5	4	1	1	22	**76**
2018-2019*	23.5	8.5	4	13.5[a]	4.5	*	*	*	22	**76**
2020-2021[b]	Locations to be determined									**65**

[a] Increase is attributable to the equivalent to the work effort associated with 4 FTE from ECA and 1 FTE from ESCWA.

[b] Assume 15 per cent efficiency gain by 2021.

* The workload distribution and the client support desks for Addis Ababa, Beirut and Santiago, as well as the required managerial/supervisory structure, will be developed in the context of the organizational design for 2018-2019.

Baseline future state summary: calculation of the estimated preliminary payroll quantitative benefit

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Payroll indicative quantitative benefits	*Total FTE*	*Consolidation 15 per cent efficiency gain through consolidation into shared service centres*[a]	*Location 15 per cent reduction assuming lower staff costs*	*Total indicative estimated benefits*
2018-2019	76	–	–	–
2020-2021	65	863.5	765.4	1 628.9
Total efficiency gain on FTE	**11**			

[a] Calculation baseline is the current total annual cost of FTEs, $5,966,000.

C. Accounts payable

Introduction

17. Accounts payable functions and tasks are currently delivered in a highly decentralized and fragmented manner, ranging from dedicated teams in a number of locations to individual staff members handling such functions on a part-time, as-needed basis in field locations.

18. The FTE analysis captures the overall workload of the current accounts payable teams in relation to tasks identified in section V of the present report. The FTE requirements for other components (vendor support desks, monitoring and global coordination and the required managerial/supervisory structure) shall be determined during the design phase of the global service delivery model.

Baseline current state summary

19. The number of transactions for the creation and approval of vendor payments is in excess of 300,000 for each activity. Based on this volume, the number of required processing FTE is estimated at 140.

Baseline current state summary — accounts payable volume and FTE by location

Area	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Kuwait*	*Other*[a]	*Unassigned*[b]	*Total*
Number of transactions approved	41 001	31 015	10 831	23 131	8 461	5 680	1 722	4 771	122 911	6 499	52 660	7 069	315 744
Number of transactions created	33 552	23 539	5 801	13 140	3 331	2 644	1 264	4 518	55 182	7 326	53 288	112 120	315 744
Processing FTE	21	15	4	9	3	2	1	3	41	4	26	11	140

[a] The "Other" column corresponds to field missions (except those currently serviced by the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and the Kuwait Joint Support Office) and a few other small footprint locations.

[b] The "Unassigned" column corresponds mostly to those transactions generated by a centralized process, which records the creator or the approver under a central user identity, not necessarily reflecting the true location of the user who prepared the data for submission within Umoja.

Baseline future state summary: calculation of the estimated preliminary accounts payable quantitative benefit (in thousands of United States dollars)

20. The locations presented above include all entities and offices administered from the location. The entities may be funded by assessed and/or other sources of funding. It is noted also that a number of payment documents created within field offices are being approved in a different location.

Baseline future state summary — proposed accounts payable FTE migration during phase 1 and 2 by location

Period	*New York*	*Geneva*	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*	*Bangkok*	*Addis Ababa*	*Beirut*	*Santiago*	*Entebbe*	*Kuwait*	*Other*	*Unassigned*	*Total*
Current	21	15	4	9	3	2	1	3	41	4	26	11	140
2018-2019*	21	15	4	12	6	*	*	*	65	–	6[a]	11[a]	140
2020-2021	Locations to be determined												119

* The workload distribution and the client support desks for Addis Ababa, Beirut and Santiago, as well as the required managerial/supervisory structure, will be developed in the context of the organizational design for 2018-2019.

[a] The FTE appearing in the "Other" and "Unassigned" columns for the budget years 2018-2019 will be assigned to the appropriate location during the detailed design phase.

Baseline future state summary — calculation of the estimated preliminary accounts payable quantitative benefits (in thousands of United States dollars)

		Consolidation	*Location*	
Accounts payable indicative quantitative benefits	*Total FTE*	*15 per cent efficiency gain through consolidation into shared service centres*[a]	*15 per cent reduction, assuming lower staff costs*	*Total indicative estimated benefits*
2018-2019	140	–	–	–
2020-2021	119	1 618.2	1 375.5	2 993.7
Total efficiency gain on FTE	21			

[a] Calculation baseline is the current total annual cost of the FTEs, $10,788,000.

D. Expansion of shared services to the field

Introduction

21. The implementation of phase 1 is expected to be completed by 2018-2019 and equates to consolidating administrative support services for those missions presently not serviced out of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe. Phase 2 will take place as the global service delivery model is further refined for 2020-2021.

22. In support of phase 1, the following elements are provided: an overview of the operating models of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and the Kuwait Joint Support Office; baseline information on the field missions to be transitioned; an approach to transition field missions to the Regional Service Centre; and a preliminary cost-benefit analysis.

Phase 1: 2018-2019

23. **Regional Service Centre in Entebbe.** The Regional Service Centre established cross-functional service lines in January 2014, which moved human resources, finance and travel functional silos into end-to-end processes based on the type of benefit or service provided. These service lines are accompanied by process guides that clearly delineate roles and responsibilities. The service line model provides accountability for end-to-end functions within one office. It also allows the service lines to be more client-oriented, as they are able to follow the client's request from beginning to end, and are more focused on specific transactions.

24. In addition to providing the full portfolio of services to 12 missions,[c] the Regional Service Centre also provides payroll services for individual uniformed personnel and national staff for seven missions[d] in Africa. This provision of services came into effect in July 2016, in anticipation and in preparation for the deployment of Umoja cluster 5 scheduled for November 2016. The Centre also supports the processing of education grants, as well as the processing of off-cycle payments, including assignment grant and relocation grant for all missions based in Africa.

25. **Kuwait Joint Support Office.** The role of the Kuwait Joint Support Office has expanded over time. In addition to providing administrative transactional services to its existing clients, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the United

[c] United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, United Nations Mission in South Sudan, United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, United Nations Support Office in Somalia, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Burundi and United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

[d] United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), United Nations Office to the African Union, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission (CNMC)

Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), the Kuwait Joint Support Office has recently assumed additional functions, such as processing of off-cycle payments for all non-African missions, the processing of education grant payments for the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and other regional missions and serving as a second Department of Field Support payroll hub to process national staff and payroll for individual uniformed personnel for all the non-African missions as part of the deployment of Umoja cluster 5.

Baseline information

26. The table below provides details of the entities currently not serviced out of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, indicating the indicative increase in client base.[e]

[e] Numbers are based on the authorized number of personnel for fiscal year 2016-2017.

Field missions supported by the Department of Field Support but not serviced out of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe

Serial	*Mission*	*International staff*	*National staff*	*UNV*	*IUP*	*Total*
1	CMP[a]	2	1	–	–	3
2	CNMC[b]	10	2	–	1	13
3	United Nations Mission in Colombia	84	105	–	450	639
4	UNLB/GSC	141	308	–	–	449
5	MINURSO	89	168	18	275	550
6	MINUSTAH	320	932	94	951	2 297
7	Special Adviser on Cyprus[a]	14	5	–	–	19
8	Special Envoy for Yemen	28	11	–	–	39
9	Special Envoy to Syria[b]	51	29	–	–	80
10	UNAMA	376	1 163	79	5	1 623
11	UNAMI	356	517	–	–	873
12	UNDOF	50	88	–	–	138
13	UNFICYP	36	119	–	69	224
14	UNIFIL	254	646	–	–	900
15	UNIOGBIS	61	66	10	15	152
16	UNMIK	109	219	24	17	369
17	UNMIL	294	560	157	276	1 287
18	UNOCI	358	712	154	692	1 916
19	UNOWAS	38	25	–	2	65
20	UNMOGIP	25	49	–	44	118
21	UNRCCA	8	22	–	–	30
22	UNRGID	7	–	–	–	7
23	UNSCO[c]	32	34	–	–	66
24	UNSCOL[d]	13	62	–	–	75
25	UNSMIL	154	41	2	–	197
26	UNTSO	91	153	–	153	397
	Total	**3 001**	**6 037**	**538**	**2 950**	**12 526**

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to the table)

[e] Administrative support provided by UNFICYP.
[f] Administrative support provided by UNOWAS.
[g] Administrative support provided by UNTSO.
[d] Administrative support provided by UNIFIL.

Abbreviations: CMP, Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus; CNMC, Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; IUP, individual uniformed personnel; UNLB/GSC, United Nations Logistics Base/Global Service Centre; MINURSO, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; MINUSTAH, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan; UNAMI, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq; UNDOF, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; UNFICYP, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; UNIOGBIS, United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau; UNMIL, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; UNMIL, United Nations Mission in Liberia; UNOCI, United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire; UNOWAS, United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel; UNMOGIP, United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan; UNRCCA, United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia; UNRGID, United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions; UNSCO, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process; UNSCOL, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon; UNSMIL, United Nations Support Mission in Libya; UNTSO, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization; UNV, United Nations Volunteers.

27. The table below provides a breakdown of the human resources and finance personnel within the 26 entities supported by the Department of Field Support.

Human resources[f] and finance staff in field missions supported by the Department of Field Support but not serviced out of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe

		International staff		*National staff*		*UNV*		
Serial	*Mission*	*Human resources*	*Finance*	*Human resources*	*Finance*	*Human resources*	*Finance*	*Total*
1	CMP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	CNMC	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3	United Nations Mission in Colombia	1	1	–	1	–	–	3
4	UNLB/GSC	3	4	7	10	–	–	24
5	MINURSO	5	4	5	7	2	1	24
6	MINUSTAH	11	14	114	21	1	–	191
7	Special Adviser on Cyprus	–	1	1	–	–	–	2
8	Special Envoy for Yemen	1	1	1	1	–	–	4
9	Special Envoy to Syria	1	2	1	–	–	–	4
10	UNAMA	4	3	10	2	2	2	23
11	UNAMI	6	–	3	–	–	–	9
12	UNDOF	3	3	6	9	–	–	21

[f] Personnel performing travel functions are included in the figures for human resources personnel.

Serial	Mission	International staff		National staff		UNV		Total
		Human resources	Finance	Human resources	Finance	Human resources	Finance	
13	UNFICYP	1	1	5	10	–	–	17
14	UNIFIL	13	7	25	22	–	–	67
15	UNIOGBIS	1	1	3	3	–	–	8
16	UNMIK	5	3	10	8	–	–	26
17	UNMIL	11	11	14	13	4	4	57
18	UNOCI	11	13	27	13	3	6	73
19	UNOWAS	1	2	2	3	–	–	8
20	UNMOGIP	3	2	5	5	–	–	15
21	UNRCCA	–	1	1	1	–	–	3
22	UNRGID	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
23	UNSCO	1	–	2	3	–	–	6
24	UNSCOL	1	1	2	1	–	–	5
25	UNSMIL	4	3	5	5	1	–	18
26	UNTSO	7	4	7	10	–	–	28
	Total	**94**	**83**	**286**	**148**	**13**	**13**	**637**

Approach to the transition to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe

28. A number of field missions supported by the Department of Field Support have been excluded from the proposal to consolidate administrative support services into the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe in 2018-2019:

(a) The Security Council mandate for UNOCI will end in April 2017, with liquidation of the mission to follow by 30 June 2017. Therefore, the mission falls outside of the start of the implementation of expanding shared services to field missions;

(b) MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia are proposed in phase 1 of the implementation of the global service model to be serviced out of the shared service centre in New York. This is subject to the decisions of the General Assembly and is without prejudice to the decisions of the Security Council on the mandates of these missions;

(c) The United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions is currently supported by the United Nations Office at Geneva. It is proposed that the current support arrangements continue in accordance with the agreed memorandum of understanding.

29. The remaining field missions supported by the Department of Field Support will transition to the Regional Service Centre in an incremental manner, as follows:

(a) **Step 1**. Step 1 will include: CNMC, MINURSO, UNIOGBIS, UNMOGIP, UNOWAS, UNSCO, UNSMIL and UNTSO. The intent is to commence provision of administrative support services from the Regional Service Centre in

Entebbe on 1 January 2018. Interim arrangements to fast track the move of MINURSO should be made for the period starting on 1 July 2017, to enable an administrative support solution given the recent crisis and as part of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2014 civilian staffing review;

(b) **Step 2**. Step 2 will include: CMP, UNDOF, UNFICYP, UNIFIL, UNMIK, UNMIL, the Special Adviser on Cyprus, the Special Envoy to Syria, UNSCOL and UNLB/GSC. The intent is to commence provision of administrative support services from the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe on 1 July 2018;

(c) **Kuwait Joint Support Office**. The Kuwait Joint Support Office will continue its shared service arrangement for UNAMA, UNAMI, UNRCCA and the Special Envoy for Yemen for the duration of phase 1 of expanding shared services to the field, as it already operates in a consolidated manner. Subsequently, the further consolidation of these four missions will be reviewed as the global service delivery model is further refined as part of the implementation of phase 2 of the project.

30. Factors that have contributed to the sequence of mission consolidation include: geographical proximity, field mission budget cycles, phase of a mission (start-up, steady state and drawdown), current administrative support arrangement as well as disaster recovery and business continuity and workload distribution considerations. Financial implications of the step 1 and 2 consolidation will be presented in proposals in the respective mission budget submissions and are subject to approval of the General Assembly. The budget submission for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe will be complementary and include details on the increase in resource requirements based on the scalability model presented in document A/70/754 to support the additional client missions. Any new to-be established missions would be supported from the Centre from the onset.

31. To ensure operational continuity and the most effective transition possible, a readiness assessment of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and missions will be conducted early in the design phase. This assessment will also be used as an opportunity to review, validate and possibly adjust the current operating model, including ensuring alignment of the model with Umoja and the performance management framework. The readiness assessment will also focus on client support at the mission level and its relationship with staff members and the Centre. This is in alignment with the larger global service delivery model guiding principles of client orientation and adaptability and service excellence.

Cost-benefit analysis

32. The qualitative benefits were highlighted in section V.E. of the present report. The factors used in determining the quantitative benefits are set out in the table below. The estimated benefits are a function of efficiency gains achieved by reducing personnel, offset by the costs associated with enhancing the set-up of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, and operating it on an ongoing basis.

Factors used in determining the quantitative benefits

	Factor	*Explanation*
+	Personnel cost balance[a]	Personnel cost of the current in-mission configuration compared with a future solution of service centre and reduced in-mission service personnel. Efficiency gains are expected after: (a) a consolidation of overall human resources/finance staff and the resulting economies of scale; and (b) transfer of staff from the missions to the service centre with a lower-cost base and a higher share of national staff.
-/+	Operational cost balance	Operational cost attributable to service personnel in the current configuration compared with operational cost in a future solution of the service centre and reduced in-mission service personnel. Operational costs include electricity; water; sanitation and cleaning services; information and communications technology (ICT) connectivity, equipment and services; security services; etc.
-	Setup costs for the expanded Regional Service Centre in Entebbe	Cost associated with enhancing the set-up of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (building and facilities; security installations; ICT installations; ICT equipment; office equipment; etc.), as well as the reduction of staff (potential indemnities) and transfer of staff to the Centre (relocation, training)
=	**Savings**	Annual and cumulative benefits of the revised operating model

[a] The analysis uses the fiscal year 2016-2017 total number of human resources and finance personnel posts in missions not serviced out of the Regional Service Centre as the baseline for the 15 per cent economy of scale dividend. It also assumes the same ratio as the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe for human resources and finance personnel remaining in-mission versus in the service centre.

33. This analysis does not attempt to include every last component; the major drivers of the different levels of quantitative benefit are:

(a) Efficiency gains realized through economies of scale associated with shared services, that is the extent of staff reductions that are realized;

(b) The location of the Regional Service Centre;

(c) The ratio of national to international staff in the future service centre.

34. In terms of efficiency gains, a 15 per cent reduction in human resources and finance personnel, the same economy of scale reduction applied during the establishment of the Regional Service Centre, has been applied. The personnel costs in the Centre are lower than those in mission settings, which will yield ongoing reduced operating costs and at the same time infrastructure at the Centre can be leveraged, thereby reducing initial investments. Elements such as position grade profiling in the Centre will be reviewed as the global service delivery model is further refined as part of the implementation of phase 2.

35. The baseline analysis uses the Regional Service Centre scalability model to determine the number of additional staff required in the Centre to serve the expanded client base. It assumes that most of the investment and initial set-up costs will be front-loaded in step 1. In addition, the analysis assumes that for each step, the transfer of posts from the missions to the Centre will take place over two years.

Expanding shared service provision through adding additional clients to the Centre is estimated to yield an estimated preliminary quantitative benefit of approximately $12 million (16 per cent) versus the existing cost over three years. The table below provides the estimated preliminary quantitative benefits over three years.

Estimated preliminary quantitative benefits

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Year 1	*Year 2*	*Year 3*
Personnel cost balance	1 513	6 700	10 367
Operational cost balance	(237)	(705)	(987)
Set-up cost	(3 110)	(1 124)	(616)
Annual savings	**(1 833)**	**4 871**	**8 764**
Cumulative savings	(1 833)	3 038	11 802

36. The cost-benefit analysis does not take into account future developments of the other proposals presented in the report. Adjustments will need to be made as the proposals progress and more details become available. In addition, any changes to the parameters used to define the model (such as the revision to the scalability model or a reduction/increase in the benchmark percentage efficiency) will alter the quantitative benefits.

37. To ensure that benefits are realized as planned, a detailed benefits realization plan will be prepared in the form of proposals in the respective mission budget submissions and are subject to approval of the General Assembly. This will involve conducting baseline measures, ensuring benefits accrued are carefully tracked, and taking corrective actions when benefits are not realized as intended.

Phase 2: 2020-2021

38. Phase 2 for the expansion of shared services to the field will take place in 2020-2021, when the global service delivery model is further refined. Location-independent services will be aligned with decisions taken as part of the model.

E. Consolidation of services within existing duty stations: the case for New York

Introduction

39. The business case for the New York shared services centre is set out in section V.F. of the present report.

Phase 1

40. In 2018-2019, and as a prerequisite to further consolidation of location-independent processes globally, a shared services centre in New York will consolidate functions categorized as "hub". The service centre will be organized into service lines representing end-to-end administrative processes, including and

not limited to human resources administration and payroll, accounts payable, as well as travel, travel claims and ticket payment processing. Local functions that could benefit from consolidation will also be integrated into the shared services centre. To ensure that the transition to a shared service environment is as seamless as possible and to build on the success of the Headquarters Deployment Group, in 2017 resources for shared services and client support will be co-located.

41. Administrative resources will be proposed for redeployment from departments and offices to the New York shared services centre in the respective budgets.

Phase 2

42. In 2020-2021, location-independent processes will be aligned with decisions to be taken as part of the global service delivery model, including consolidation globally into two shared services centres for human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable, subject to the decisions of the General Assembly, with further alignment as the model develops and is implemented across the Secretariat.

Baseline information

43. Administrative services in New York are provided by offices of the Department of Management and numerous executive and administrative offices. During the design phase, administrative functions will be reviewed in line with the global service delivery model methodology to determine those that are categorized as headquarters, local and location dependent, and those that are determined as hub or location-independent and are suitable for shared services arrangements. Local functions that could benefit from consolidation will also be integrated into the shared services centre, as appropriate. As the implementation of the global service delivery model progresses, administrative support functions will increasingly be consolidated into shared service centres, as appropriate, thereby allowing departments and offices to focus on their core mandates, and the shared services centres to focus on the delivery of administrative support services that meet the operational requirements of its clients. The table below shows positions in New York for the following job families: human resources; finance; procurement; logistics and supply chain; and administration.

Positions in New York by relevant job family

	Finance			*Human resources*			*Procurement*			*Logistics and supply chain*			*Administration*			
Department or office	*Professional and higher*	*General Service and related categories*	*Total*	*Professional and higher*	*General Service and related categories*	*Total*	*Professional and higher*	*General Service and related categories*	*Total*	*Professional and higher*	*General Service and related categories*	*Total*	*Professional and higher*	*General Service and related categories*	*Total*	*Grand total*
CTED	–	1	1	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	4	6	8
DESA	10	10	20	5	13	18	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	64	67	105
DFS	41	17	58	60	47	107	2	1	3	33	5	38	35	58	93	299
DGACM	3	2	5	3	3	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	7	25	32	43
DPA	4	10	14	1	10	11	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	39	45	70
DPI	5	5	10	2	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	49	54	66
DPKO	4	4	8	29	7	36	–	–	–	1	–	1	14	79	93	138
DSS	3	2	5	10	2	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	44	48	65
EOSG	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
OCHA	10	13	23	7	6	13	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	34	38	74
ODA	–	2	2	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	17	20	23
OIOS	1	2	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	8	17	25	28
OLA	–	2	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	26	29	31
Other	1	4	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	57	63	68
DM																
EO	3	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	13	19	23
OCSS	1	5	6	1	–	1	46	26	72	–	4	4	19	113	132	215
OHRM	2	1	3	74	55	129	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	35	39	171
OICT	2	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	2	5	26	31	37
OPPBA	148	102	250	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	9	55	64	314
Other	16	3	19	13	1	14	5	–	5	2	–	2	22	25	47	87
Total	**254**	**188**	**442**	**205**	**146**	**351**	**53**	**27**	**80**	**36**	**11**	**47**	**178**	**827**	**1 005**	**1 925**

Abbreviations: CTED, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate; DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; DFS, Department of Field Support; DGACM, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management; DPA, Department of Political Affairs; DPI, Department of Public Information; DPKO, Department of Peacekeeping Operations; DSS, Department of Safety and Security; EOSG, Executive Office of the Secretary-General; OCHA, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; ODA, Office for Disarmament Affairs; OIOS, Office of Internal Oversight Services; OLA, Office of Legal Affairs; DM, Department of Management; EO, Executive Office; OCSS, Office of Central Support Services; OHRM, Office of Human Resources Management; OICT, Office of Information and Communications Technology; OPPBA, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts.

Extract for New York from baseline current state summary: human resources administration, payroll and accounts payable volume and full-time equivalent

	Human resources administration	*Payroll*	*Accounts payable*
Transaction volume	7 452[a]	14 556	41 001 created and 33 552 approved
Processing FTE	66	23.5	21

[a] Includes the administration for all duty stations of short-term language staff, staff on WAE contracts, staff that are providing services pro bono and non-staff that receive compensation through payroll, such as judges, the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Chair and Vice-Chair of ICSC. Excludes international staff of field missions that are payrolled by New York.

Extract for New York from baseline future state summary: proposed FTE migration during phases 1 and 2, by location

	Human resources administration	*Payroll*	*Accounts payable*
Current	66	23.5	21
2018-2019	66[a]	23.5	21
2020-2021	*Locations to be determined*		

[a] Excludes 17 FTEs from MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia, which are subject to decisions of the Security Council.

44. With reference to the table above, in 2018-2019, New York will be responsible for providing human resources administration and payroll services to all New-York based entities, ECLAC and field missions in the region, such as MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia;[g] the centre will continue to provide payroll services for all entities based in New York, as well as for international staff in field missions.

45. In 2020-2021, location-independent processes will be subject to the decisions of the General Assembly on the locations of the shared service centres.

[g] Subject to decision of the Security Council on the mandates of MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in Colombia.

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Agenda item 68 (c)
Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ahmed Shaheed, submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 31/19.

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Summary

The Special Rapporteur submits the present report, his sixth to the General Assembly, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 31/19. In his report the Special Rapporteur primarily presents information gathered from government sources and relayed by alleged victims of rights violations as well as civil society actors located inside and outside the country.

I. Introduction

1. Since 2011 the Special Rapporteur has observed several developments that could lead to positive changes in the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. These include the publication of a draft charter of citizens' rights; the emergence of a limited public dialogue on a handful of human rights issues, including the use of the death penalty for non-violent drug crimes; the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; and legislative steps taken by the parliament to improve the protection of certain rights.

2. Most of these developments have not, however, yielded tangible or sufficient improvements in the country's human rights situation, for reasons that will be further discussed below. Specifically, there is a notable gap between the law and State-sanctioned practices that violate fundamental rights. While recent legislative efforts to strengthen protections for the rights of the accused are noteworthy, they offer little relief in the absence of proper implementation and enforcement by the executive and judicial branches of Government.

3. Information gathered from government sources and civil society actors continues to highlight the arbitrary detention and prosecution of individuals for their legitimate exercise of myriad rights, as well as the use of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, following the enactment of these legal improvements. Human rights defenders continue to face intimidation, censure and retribution for their contact with the United Nations human rights mechanisms and international human rights organizations, and those alleged to have abused their authority continue to enjoy impunity. Other legislation, including the country's anti-narcotics laws, which have not yet been amended, continue to violate the right to life.

4. The Special Rapporteur wishes to highlight the Government's continued engagement with the special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, including through dialogue with his mandate and by way of recent invitations to the Special Rapporteur on the right to food and the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral and coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights to visit the country.[1] In its response to the present report, the Government asserts that it "has so far paved the way for the visits of seven thematic rapporteurs and working groups".[2] However, the authorities remain reticent with regard to repeated requests for country visits made by eight thematic mandate holders and the country-specific mandate holder since 2005, date of the last visit to the country by a special rapporteur.[3]

5. A total of 23 communications concerning pressing developments or emerging issues detailed in the present report and/or appealing for remedy were transmitted by the Special Rapporteur to the Government from January to mid-August 2016. Of these, 22 were urgent actions and 1 was an allegation letter joined by several

[1] See http://spinternet.ohchr.org/_Layouts/SpecialProceduresInternet/ViewCountryVisits.aspx?Lang=en.

[2] Seven representatives of the special procedures visited the Islamic Republic Iran between 1995 and 2005, after which no visits were facilitated by the Government.

[3] See www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/CountryvisitsF-M.aspx.

thematic mandate holders. The Government responded to 7, reducing its rate of reply from 38 per cent in 2015 to 30 per cent during the reporting period. The Government also continues to respond, at length, to the Special Rapporteur's reports, including the current one.

6. The present report contains primarily information gathered from government sources and relayed by alleged victims of rights violations, as well as civil society actors located inside and outside the country. This includes information gathered from government responses to communications transmitted jointly by special procedure mandate holders during the first seven months of 2016; information gathered from various websites maintained by branches and agencies of the Government; information published or submitted by non-governmental organizations located inside the Islamic Republic of Iran; laws and draft legislation; details presented in national stakeholder reports submitted by officials for the universal periodic review exercise in 2014; and information gleaned from statements published either by national media sources or by individual government officials.

7. The Special Rapporteur also relays information gathered from 43 interviews conducted during fact-finding visits to Stockholm, Berlin and Munich, Germany, and Turin, Italy, in May 2016. Information from additional interviews was collected via telephone, Skype and other messenger services during the reporting period from individuals located inside and outside the country.

II. Civil and political rights

8. On 26 November 2013, President Hassan Rouhani, highlighting his campaign promise to improve the protection of human rights, released a draft charter of citizens' rights that addresses a range of civil and political rights guaranteed by Iranian law. Since its publication, however, no significant steps have been taken to either finalize or implement the charter's provisions. The Government notes that it expects the charter to be finalized by "the end of the current year". While applauding the effort, the Special Rapporteur notes that many of the charter's provisions fail to sufficiently protect fundamental rights, including the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

9. The Government accepted 189 of the 291 recommendations that were the outcome of its universal periodic review in 2014, asserting that the majority of the recommendations had already been implemented, including the recommendation to strengthen its domestic legal framework and implement its international human rights obligations. Despite these commitments and the country's legal obligations, the state of protections for the majority of rights guaranteed by the five human rights instruments to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party remains largely unchanged.

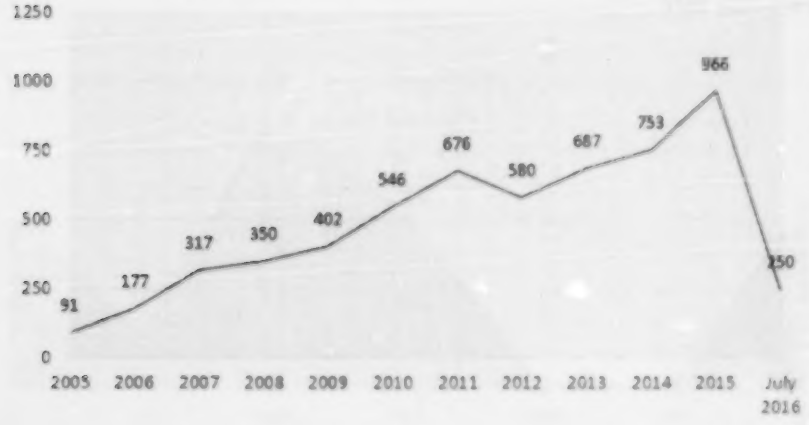
A. Right to life

10. The Government received 41 recommendations related to its use of capital punishment during the second cycle of its universal period review in 2014. They include recommendations to abolish the death penalty for juvenile offenders; to

establish a moratorium for crimes not considered "most serious" by international standards; and to ban stoning and public executions. In April 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights called on the authorities to halt executions of juvenile and drug offenders and to institute a moratorium on the use of the death penalty altogether.[4]

11. Human rights organizations estimate that despite these appeals, between 966 and 1,054 executions took place in 2015, the highest number in over 20 years.[5] Between 241[6] and 253[7] executions were reportedly carried out from January to the end of the third week of July 2016. This number is significantly lower than the number of executions carried out during the same period in 2015. In the light of the repeated concerns expressed by the Special Rapporteur and other human rights bodies and organizations, any decrease in the number of executions is a positive development. However, reports received by the Special Rapporteur suggest that the number of executions in the Islamic Republic of Iran increased again in July 2016, when human rights organizations documented at least 40 executions carried out during the first three weeks of that month (see figures I-III).[8] As in previous years, the majority of the executions in 2015 and 2016 were for drug-related offences.

Figure I
Executions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2005 to July 2016



[4] See www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=19816&LangID=E.

[5] See www.iranhrdc.org/english/publications/human-rights-data/chart-of-executions/1000000564-ihrdc-chart-of-executions-by-the-islamic-republic-of-iran-2015.html; www.iranrights.org/; http://iranhr.net/en/; and www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/iran/.

[6] Information received by the Office of the Special Rapporteur from the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation (www.iranrights.org).

[7] Information received by the Office of the Special Rapporteur from Iran Human Rights (http://iranhr.net).

[8] See http://iranhr.net/en/articles/2585/. According to the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation, there were a total of 62 executions in July 2016.

Figure II
Executions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, by month, 2015

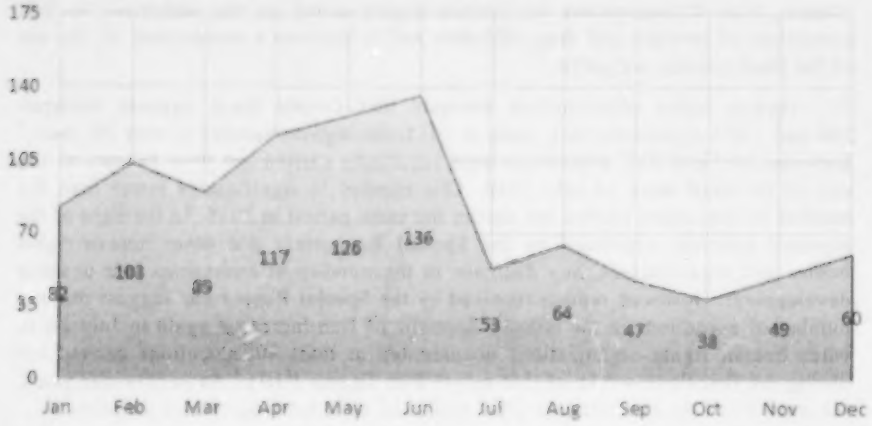
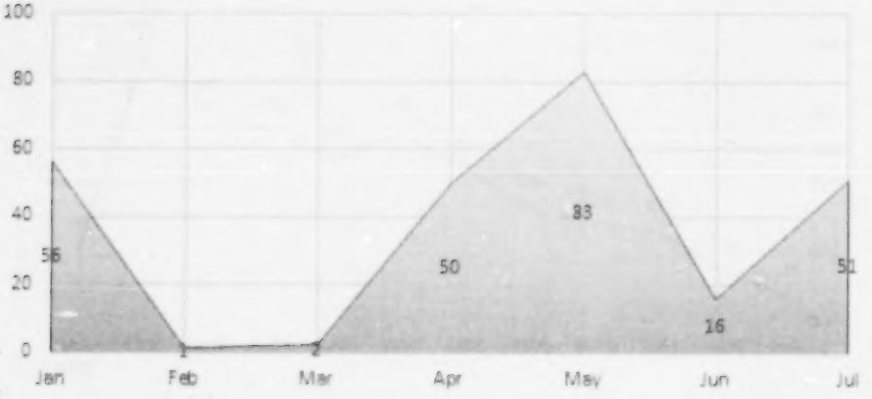


Figure III
Number of executions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, by month, January-July 2016



12. In its response to the present report, the Government again maintains that drug trafficking is a serious offence that requires the use of the death penalty under certain circumstances (which it claims has a "[highly] deterrent effect") and rejects the adoption of a moratorium on the death penalty. The Government also confirms that there was a "more than 50 per cent decrease in implementation of capital punishment during the first six months of 2016" and maintains that "no information has been received, from any international authorities, regarding non-observance of legal standards" with respect to individuals sentenced to death for drug-related crimes. The Special Rapporteur joins the Secretary-General, the Human Rights Committee and other special procedure mandate holders in their ongoing calls for the Government to reconsider its use of capital punishment.

13. Since 2015, at least two women convicted of the crime of adultery have been sentenced to stoning.[9] In its response to the Special Rapporteur's report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/31/69), the Government notes that that criminalization of adultery is consistent with its interpretation of Islamic law and that stoning is an effective deterrent. On 7 July 2016, the Government also asserted that the judiciary had converted these sentences to other punishments and that no stoning sentences had been carried out in the country in recent years.[10]

14. Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code of the Islamic Republic of Iran that became effective in June 2015 now require that all death sentences be reviewed by the Supreme Court (ibid., para. 25). These changes annul article 32 of the Anti-Narcotics Law, which authorized the country's Prosecutor General to fast-track and confirm death sentences for drug-related offences adjudicated by revolutionary courts. On 7 December 2015, the Supreme Court issued a ruling requiring all revolutionary courts to refer drug-related death sentences to it for review.[11]

15. However, the Special Rapporteur continues to receive information indicating that violations of due process rights, including the right to appeal death sentences, remain problematic in drug-related cases.[12] In April 2016, for example, prison authorities in the northern city of Rasht executed Rashid Kouhi, who was convicted of a non-violent drug-trafficking offence in the absence of review by the Supreme Court, as required by law.[13] Human rights groups reported that Mr. Kouhi did not receive adequate legal assistance in requesting an appeal to the Supreme Court and that his requests for clemency were rejected. Mr. Kouhi was also reportedly deprived of access to a lawyer during his interrogation and met with a pro bono State-appointed lawyer for the first time during his trial.[14]

16. In December 2015, 70 members of parliament presented a bill that, if approved by the legislature and the Guardian Council, would reduce the punishment for non-violent drug-related crimes from death to life imprisonment. On 11 January 2016, the bill was introduced on the main floor of the parliament for review.[15] It is not known whether the apparent drop in the number of executions during the first six months of 2016 is directly related to the Government's increasing sensitivity to drug-related executions or the result of newly implemented and pending legislation.

[9] See www.darsiahkal.ir/64601/64601 (in Persian).

[10] Reply of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to a communication dated 20 January 2016.

[11] See www.rrk.ir/Laws/ShowLaw.aspx?Code=8008 (in Persian).

[12] See www.iranrights.org/newsletter/issue/74.

[13] See https://hra-news.org/fa/execution/a-4759 (in Persian).

[14] See www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/04/iranian-man-facing-imminent-execution-tomorrow-denied-the-right-to-appeal/.

[15] See www.farsnews.com/13941021000764 (in Persian).

B. Executions of juveniles

17. The Special Rapporteur notes with great concern that under articles 146 and 147 of the Islamic Penal Code, the Islamic Republic of Iran retains the death penalty for boys of at least 15 lunar years of age and girls of at least 9 lunar years.

18. On 12 January 2016, the Committee on the Rights of the Child concluded its review of the implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In its concluding observations (CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4), the Committee expressed great concern about the ongoing execution of juveniles and called on the Government to withdraw reservations that sanction judicial disregard of provisions of the Convention. They also called on the Government to define juveniles as anyone under the age of 18, in line with Convention standards, and to raise the age of criminal responsibility for girls so that there is no discrimination between boys and girls. In its response, the Government continues to defend its use of a general reservation to the Convention based on its "religious teachings and culture".

19. Amendments to the Islamic Penal Code in 2013 repealed capital punishment for juveniles found guilty of committing drug-related offences and now require a judge to determine whether these defendants understood the consequences of their actions at the time they committed non-drug-related capital offences. In January 2015, the Supreme Court issued a ruling requiring all courts to apply the new amendment retroactively for cases adjudicated prior to 2013 if a juvenile defendant petitions for an appeal.[16]

20. The Special Rapporteur notes with great concern that, notwithstanding these reforms, the number of executions of juvenile offenders has actually increased during the past few years. He also continues to receive reports maintaining that some juvenile offenders have been denied the right to appellate review, that the Supreme Court has rejected several petitions for retrial and that it confirmed the death sentences of at least six juvenile offenders.[17] The Special Rapporteur has also received reports suggesting that the criteria used by courts to assess mental capacity vary widely and are inconsistently applied throughout the country.[18] The Government rejects this allegation, and in its response asserts that amendments to the Islamic Penal Code have resulted in a reduction in the number of juvenile executions this year.

21. At least one confirmed execution of a juvenile had reportedly been carried out as of the date of drafting of the present report and four juvenile executions took place in 2015.[19] At least 73 juvenile offenders were reportedly executed between 2005 and 2015 and some 160 others were reportedly awaiting execution as of January 2016.[20] In its response, the Government notes that in all cases of retributive justice for juvenile offenders, its fundamental policy is to encourage reconciliation between the perpetrators' and victims' families in lieu of the death penalty. It also notes that executions of juvenile offenders are not carried out until the perpetrators reach 18 years of age.

[16] See www.rrk.ir/Laws/ShowLaw.aspx?Code=2460 (in Persian).
[17] See www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/3112/2016/en/.
[18] Ibid.
[19] See www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/08/iran-hanging-of-teenager-shows-brazen-disregard-for-international-law/.
[20] Ibid.

C. Right to be free from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

22. The Special Rapporteur continued to receive reports alleging the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment during the reporting period. Such treatment includes the continued use of amputations,[21] blinding and flogging as a form of punishment, reliance on physical and mental torture or ill-treatment to coerce confessions (mostly during pretrial detention) and the denial of access to proper and necessary medical treatment for detainees. Human rights groups have documented at least one amputation[22] and several floggings during the reporting period.[23]

23. In its response, the Government rejects the notion that amputations and floggings amount to torture and maintains that they are effective deterrents to criminal activity. It also reports that 4,332 complaints alleging rights violations were submitted in the past four years, including torture and ill-treatment, and that "only a small percentage" warranted action. No specific information is provided regarding prosecutions and/or convictions of individuals alleged to be involved in the torture or ill-treatment of detainees.

24. In early 2016, a spokesperson for the judiciary in Qazvin province announced that the authorities had arrested 35 young women and men who were attending a graduation party. He reported that all those attending the event had been convicted and sentenced to 99 lashes each, because they were "half-naked while consuming alcohol and engaging in acts incompatible with chastity which disturbed the public opinion", and that the sentences were carried out promptly the same day.[24]

25. Some 17 miners in Azarbayjan-e Gharbi province were reportedly flogged for protesting against the firing of hundreds of colleagues pursuant to two court rulings in Takab sentencing the miners to between 30 and 100 lashes.[25] In its response, the Government maintains that the workers were flogged as the result of a lawsuit filed by the mining company, which accused the workers of blocking the entrance to the mine, insulting or threatening the mine's guard and resorting to violence, not because the workers had exercised their rights to association or assembly. The Government also reports that nine individuals received between 30 and 50 lashes as punishment for their crimes.

26. In May 2016, the mother of journalist Afarin Chitsaz, who was arrested and accused of colluding with foreign Governments, announced that interrogators had blindfolded and beaten her daughter to coerce a confession.[26] Security officials arrested Ms. Chitsaz, along with several colleagues, on 2 November 2015 and detained her incommunicado for more than a month. In its response, the Government notes that the courts sentenced Ms. Chitsaz to two years' imprisonment and a two-year ban on journalistic activities upon release.

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[21] Articles 217-288 of the Islamic Penal Code.
[22] See hra-news.org/fa/uncategorized/a-5594 (in Persian).
[23] See, e.g., www.isna.ir/news/95030703729 (in Persian).
[24] Ibid.
[25] See www.ilna.ir (in Persian).
[26] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/05/afarin-chitsaz/.

27. On 14 May 2016, Ehsan Mazandarani, a reformist journalist arrested along with Ms. Chitsaz, sent a letter to the Supreme Leader requesting an investigation into his alleged torture and mistreatment by security officials during his interrogations and pretrial detention. Mr. Mazandarani was allegedly pressured by Revolutionary Guards three days later to deny the allegations raised in the letter. He was sentenced to seven years in prison on the charges of "propaganda against the State" and "assembly and collusion against national security". An appeals court later reduced his sentence to two years.[27]

28. Human rights organizations issued several comprehensive reports during the reporting period documenting the ill-treatment of "political detainees", including denial of medical care and inadequate nutrition in an effort to intimidate or punish detainees or to coerce confessions.[28]

29. On 27 April 2016, the Special Rapporteur joined a group of other United Nations experts to issue a statement reminding the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran of its obligations under international standards to respect prisoners' right to health and to ensure their humane treatment by allowing them adequate access to proper and necessary medical treatment. The experts highlighted the cases of a number of political activists and human rights defenders and expressed regret that the Government had until then failed to properly investigate allegations of mistreatment or to offer relief.[29] Since the publication of the statement, some of these prisoners received adequate medical attention.

30. Omid Kokabee, a young physicist who has reportedly been imprisoned in the Islamic Republic of Iran for more than five years for his refusal to work on military research, underwent surgery on 20 April 2016 to remove his right kidney, which was damaged as a result of advanced cancer. It was alleged that despite the family's repeated requests for medical furlough, Mr. Kokabee was denied an opportunity for the early detection and treatment of his cancer following complaints of serious pain, bleeding and other complications of multiple episodes of kidney stones.[30] Mr. Kokabee is serving a 10-year sentence on charges of having "relations with a hostile country" and receiving "illegitimate funds". In its response, the Government alleges that Mr. Kokabee was convicted of the "serious offences" of cooperating with the Government of the United States and spying. It notes that Mr. Kokabee has been conditionally released from prison and is currently free.

31. The family of Zeynab Jalalian, an Iranian Kurdish woman serving a life sentence in connection with her alleged membership in a Kurdish opposition group, maintains that Ms. Jalalian has been denied medical care for injuries sustained during a beating inflicted by security officials that resulted in a skull fracture and caused neurological damage, including haemorrhaging and vision impairment. Sources maintain that Ms. Jalalian urgently requires medical intervention, but that authorities have repeatedly refused to authorize her transfer to a hospital unless she confesses to her

[27] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/07/ehsan-mazandarani-6/.

[28] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/06/inside-the-women-ward-report/; and www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/4196/2016/en/.

[29] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/iran-denial-of-adequate-medical-treatment-to-political-prisoners-unacceptable/.

[30] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/04/omid-kokabee-cancer/.

alleged crimes.[31] In its response, the Government flatly denies allegations that it is "using force to obtain [a] confession" from her.

D. Due process and fair trial rights

32. The Special Rapporteur applauded recent amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code in his report to the Human Rights Council, but noted that serious problems continued to undermine the administration of justice in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The amendments provide for immediate access to legal counsel upon arrest and during preliminary investigations,[32] and require that defendants be informed of their rights prior to the onset of an investigation. Violations of these rights, or failure to communicate them to the accused, should result in disciplinary action but will not impact the admissibility of evidence obtained under these conditions.[33]

33. Revisions to the amendments by the Guardian Council effectively exempt from these increased protections individuals accused of national security, capital, political or press crimes and those accused of offences that carry life sentences. Persons accused of crimes falling into these categories must select their counsel from an official pool of lawyers chosen by the head of the judiciary.[34] On 6 July 2015, the bar association reportedly called upon the head of judiciary, the parliament and the President to reconsider the revisions.[35] As of this writing, the judiciary had not provided an official list of approved lawyers.

34. In addition to problems with the laws themselves, the Special Rapporteur notes that many of the reports he receives regarding due process and fair trial violations involve a failure on the part of the authorities to simply implement existing laws. He continues to receive reports of individuals who are arrested without being presented with a warrant, and he has documented cases during the current reporting period where individuals and their families were not provided with adequate information regarding the circumstances of their arrest. He also continues to receive reports alleging that security officials, especially those affiliated with the Intelligence Ministry and the intelligence unit of the Revolutionary Guards, continue to arrest and detain individuals for prolonged periods without allowing contact with family members or legal counsel. The Special Rapporteur has repeatedly noted that this period of incommunicado detention renders detainees vulnerable to various forms of abuse, including torture.

35. On 7 June 2016, Evin prison authorities reportedly deprived activist Arash Sadeghi of access to a lawyer of his own choosing and forced him to begin serving his 15-year prison sentence for "assembly and collusion against national security", "propaganda against the State", "spreading lies in cyberspace" and "insulting the founder of the Islamic Republic". He was also reportedly subjected to psychological and physical torture and ill-treatment during his detention.

[31] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/02/zeinab-jalalian/.
[32] See www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde13/2708/2016/en/.
[33] Article 190, note 1, of the Criminal Procedure Code (2015).
[34] Article 48, note, of the Criminal Procedure Code (2015).
[35] See http://icbar.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=55&ctl=Edit&mid=435&Code=22124 (in Persian).

36. On 11 July 2016, the judiciary announced the indictment of three dual nationals on national security-related charges.[36] Information received by the Special Rapporteur suggests that the detainees were held incommunicado for prolonged periods, denied access to a lawyer and threatened with the arrest of family members.

37. For example, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a project manager for the Thomson-Reuters Foundation, was reportedly detained by security agents on 3 April 2016 as she attempted to return to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with her 22-month-old daughter. On 15 June, authorities issued a statement confirming her arrest and accusing her of plotting the "soft overthrow of the Islamic Republic" through "membership in foreign companies and institutions". Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe is believed to have spent at least 45 days in solitary confinement and has allegedly been denied adequate access to a lawyer.[37] She was sentenced in early September to five years' imprisonment on "secret charges".[38] In its response, the Government denies the allegation that Ms. Zaghari-Ratcliffe was denied adequate access to her lawyer and affirms that her final court session was held on 5 September 2016.

38. Homa Hoodfar, a 65-year-old professor of anthropology at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, was reportedly arrested and detained on 6 June 2016 after being summoned to Evin prison for questioning. The arrest followed a raid on Ms. Hoodfar's home by members of the intelligence unit of the Revolutionary Guards in early March, shortly before she was to leave the country. During the raid the agents confiscated Ms. Hoodfar's personal belongings, including her passports, research documents and computer. She was since released on bail and prohibited from leaving the country. Ms. Hoodfar's lawyer and family have reportedly been deprived access to her and authorities have not provided an explanation for her detention.[39] On 26 September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Ms. Hoodfar had been released that day on humanitarian grounds.[40] In its response, the Government alleges that Ms. Hoodfar "benefits from proper health and medical facilities and is under doctor's visit three times a day", "has an appointed lawyer" and was free on bail at the time the present report was being drafted.

39. The reasons for the detention of cyber activist and Internet entrepreneur Arash Zad, who was arrested on 1 August 2015 while boarding a plane to Istanbul, Turkey, at Imam Khomeini airport in Tehran remains unknown. Mr. Zad is the Persian-language editor of the website Weblogina and director of Zigzag Lab, which provides web-based tools and services for Iranian users.[41] Mr. Zad is believed, among other things, to have been deprived of the right to a lawyer and the right to mount a proper defence.

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[36] See www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/iran-indicts-dual-nationals-including-a-us-businessman-but-wont-say-for-what/2016/07/11/ad6b0b96-4775-11e6-90a8-fb84201e0645_story.html.

[37] See www.tabnak.ir/fa/news/600341 (in Persian).

[38] See www.bbc.com/news/uk-37321030.

[39] See www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1395/03/26/1105903/ (in Persian).

[40] See www.presstv.com/Detail/2016/09/26/486498/Iran-Canada-Oman-Homa-Hoodfar-Bahram-Qassemi.

[41] See www.article19.org/resources.php/resource/38104/en/iran:-detained-internet-entrepreneur-must-be-released.

E. Rights to freedom of expression, opinion, information and the press

40. The Special Rapporteur notes that national laws and practices continue to severely restrict the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Individuals continue to provide reports detailing arbitrary detention for the legitimate exercise of these rights. Journalists, writers, social media activists and human rights defenders continued to be interrogated and arrested by government agents during the first half of 2016.

41. At least 14 journalists and 15 bloggers and social media activists were reportedly either in detention or sentenced for their peaceful activities as of July 2016, and reports suggest that many others are subjected to interrogations, surveillance and other forms of harassment and intimidation.[42]

42. Reports suggest that at least two licensed newspapers and publications have been shut down by the authorities.[43] The Special Rapporteur also expresses his concern regarding what appears to be an increase in the targeting and prosecution of artists and musicians for peacefully exercising their right to free expression.

43. The judiciary also reportedly continues to convict individuals who peacefully exercise their freedom of expression for crimes such as "propaganda against the State", "insulting" political or religious figures and harming "national security", and imposes heavy prison sentences. Judicial officials continue to rely on the Islamic Penal Code, the 1986 Press Law, the Cybercrimes Law and the newly passed Political Crimes Law to restrict content that might damage the "foundation" of the Islamic Republic, offend government officials or religious figures and undermine the Government's definition of decency, or that meets their criteria for an affront to religious and cultural values. In its response, the Government maintains that the restrictions are compatible with its international legal obligations.

44. Reports received by the Special Rapporteur indicate that since March 2016, several pre-approved concerts by well-known Persian musicians across the country have been cancelled. Some of the cancellations were supported by members of the clerical establishment, including the Friday prayer leader of Mashad. In Tehran, a concert by the national orchestra was reportedly cancelled by authorities without explanation.[44]

45. On 15 May 2016, the Revolutionary Guards cybercrime investigation unit announced that their surveillance operation, "Project Spider 2", had identified 58 fashion models, 51 fashion house owners and clothing designers, 59 photographers and makeup artists and two fashion institutes as liable for prosecution in connection with their professional activities. Some 29 criminal cases were filed and eight individuals were arrested and had their businesses shuttered under judicial orders. The authorities announced that the crackdown was part of a wider programme that targeted more than 170 fashion industry workers during the first six months of 2016. One of the models, Elham Arab, was forced to "repent" and apologize on national television.[45] On 7 June, the Revolutionary Guards branch in Fars province announced

[42] Information received by the Office of the Special Rapporteur from Reporters Without Borders.
[43] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/06/ghanoon-daily/.
[44] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/05/shahram-nazeri/.
[45] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/05/fashion-models-arrested/.

the arrest of an additional 12 people who were allegedly engaged in a range of activities related to modelling. The defendants were accused of "promoting corruption and cultural subjugation" and "producing and posting vulgar and immoral images of families and individuals in cyberspace".[46] In its response, the Government notes that the aforementioned individuals were "promoting universal vulgarism via propagating professional modelling with the aim of normalizing immorality" and defends its actions as being in the interest of protecting national security and public morality.

46. On 29 May 2016, the Supreme Council of Cyberspace announced new regulations that would require foreign messaging application companies to move data they possess about Iranian users onto servers located inside the country, prompting concerns regarding the security and privacy of users. The Council, whose members are selected by the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, reportedly gave social media companies one year to comply with the new regulations. Analysts maintain that the new requirements disproportionately affect the company Telegram, whose cloud-based instant messaging service has gained popularity in the Islamic Republic of Iran and has an estimated 20 million users in the country.[47]

47. In June 2016, Mehdi Rajabian, a musician and founder of BargMusic, Yousef Emadi, a musician and co-founder of BargMusic, and Hossein Rajabian, an independent film-maker, were summoned to serve three-year prison sentences for "insulting the sacred" and "spreading propaganda against the State". All three men were arrested in 2013 and reportedly held for over two months in solitary confinement before being released on bail. They were allegedly subjected to torture and forced to confess to the charges.[48]

48. On 8 June 2016, Mohammad Reza Fathi, a blogger and journalist from the town of Saveh in the north of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was convicted of "publishing lies" and "disturbing public opinion" after three individuals who worked for local government bodies complained of his critical writings on the Internet. A lower court sentenced Mr. Fathi to 444 lashes, but execution of the sentence is pending a final ruling from a court of appeals.[49]

49. On 20 June 2016, editors at *Ghanoon* announced the closure of the newspaper pursuant to an order by the Chief Prosecutor of Tehran. The order was reportedly issued following a complaint by the Revolutionary Guards, who accused the paper of "defamation and publishing falsehoods with the intent to cause public anxiety". The suspension of the paper, often characterized as supporting President Rouhani, occurred a day after the President said he was "proud of freedom of the press" in the country. The paper's journalists have alleged that hardliners in the country are punishing the paper because they do not approve of its content.[50] In its response, the Government notes that a final judgment has not yet been issued in this case.

50. Also on 20 June 2016, the Prosecutor General of Tehran announced that security forces had arrested 17 people in connection with "immoral content" posted

[46] See www.farsnews.com' (in Persian).
[47] See www.irna.ir/fa/News/82091878/ (in Persian).
[48] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/06/music-distributors-summoned-to-prison-dont-forget-us/.
[49] See www.atreyas.ir/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/717.pdf (in Persian).
[50] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/06/ghanoon-daily2/.

on social media sites. No further information was provided regarding the circumstances of the arrests.[51] Although Facebook and Twitter continue to be blocked in the Islamic Republic of Iran, millions of Iranians, including government officials, access the social media platforms using circumvention tools. In its response, the Government asserts that "smart restrictions" impede access to sites of immorality, child abuse and terrorist groups and those that lack respect for domestic and international laws and regulations.

51. On 31 June 2016, a number of journalists, human rights activists, family members of political prisoners and publishers reported receiving threatening text messages from an unknown source stating that any "contact and cooperation with hostile elements outside the country ... constitutes criminal activity and is subject to prosecution". The short message concluded: "This message is [your] final security warning." Government officials, including those from the Intelligence Ministry, have categorically denied any responsibility for the text message. A group of the journalists have since filed a complaint with the judiciary asking authorities to investigate the matter. A spokesperson for the judiciary announced that the courts would investigate if a complaint was filed, but noted that he did not believe the text message was "threatening" since "contact with counter-revolutionary elements is a crime and a warning is justified".[52]

F. Right to freedom of association and assembly

52. Serious concern about laws and practices that restrict or violate the rights of free association and peaceful assembly in the Islamic Republic of Iran persist. Insufficient protections for these rights continue to compromise the independence of political, professional and labour groups, including trade unions. The situation of human rights defenders, including lawyers who defend political and human rights activists, remains of deeply concern. In its response, the Government notes that 126 "guilds" are active in the country and that their assemblies must be authorized.

53. The formal attorneyship bill, which envisions significant government control and influence over the activities of the semi-independent bar association, is still under consideration by the parliament.[53] Human rights defenders and lawyers continue to challenge provisions that would bring the bar association under the greater supervision of government officials.[54] President Rouhani's office reportedly introduced a new version of the bill to the parliament on 14 January 2014.[55] In its response, the Government reports that review of the draft bill is currently suspended.

54. The Special Rapporteur continues to express serious concern that as of 14 February 2016, former presidential candidates and reformists Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, and Zahra Rahnavard will have spent five full years under house arrest in the absence of charges or a trial (A/HRC/31/69, para. 49). The

[51] See www.mehrnews.com/news/3691190/ (in Persian).

[52] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/07/160716_l39_journalists_lawsuit_sms_threat (in Persian).

[53] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/latest-reports/march-2015-report-of-the-special-rapporteur-on-human-rights-in-iran/.

[54] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/07/parliamentary-threaten-legal-profession/; and www.irna.ir/fa/News/81588564/ (in Persian).

[55] See www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1393/07/01/507930/ (in Persian)

Special Rapporteur has repeatedly called on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release these opposition figures from house arrest. Security and intelligence forces placed the three under house arrest in February 2011 after they protested against the results of the disputed 2009 presidential election. In its response, the Government alleges that there is "documentary evidence" linking the aforementioned individuals to "multiple crimes" related to the 2009 post-election protests and that their present situation reflects the authorities' "flexible treatment" of them and is for their own protection.

55. On 18 May 2016, the lawyer of prominent human rights defender Narges Mohammadi announced that his client had been convicted and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment because of her membership in a group that advocates for the abolition of the death penalty. She was also sentenced to five years for "assembly and collusion against national security" and one year for "propaganda against the State". On 20 May, the Special Rapporteur issued a joint statement with several other United Nations experts expressing outrage at the sentence, and noted that the campaign targeting activists like Ms. Mohammadi "is emblematic of the heavy crackdown that human rights defenders, journalists and civil society activists continue to face in the Islamic Republic of Iran today simply for doing their jobs".[56] Ms. Mohammadi initiated a hunger strike in prison on 27 June to protest against the authorities' decision to deprive her of communication with her children, who are currently living with their father in France. She suffers from a serious neurological condition which requires constant care and supervision.[57] On 28 September, an appeals court upheld her 16-year prison sentence. In its response, the Government maintains that Ms. Mohammadi has received medical treatment and rejects allegations that she has been imprisoned because of her lawful activities as a human rights defender.

56. In a joint statement issued on 20 May 2016, the Special Rapporteur and other United Nations experts also expressed concern for the situation and health of several other human rights defenders and lawyers who are serving heavy sentences for their peaceful activities, including Abdolfattah Soltani, Bahareh Hedayat and Mohammad Sediq Kaboudvand. The Special Rapporteur recalled the Government's responsibility to ensure that human rights defenders do not face prosecution for promoting and advancing human rights in the country.[58] He also notes that in addition to detaining human rights lawyers, their continued targeting and harassment by the authorities has apparently forced some lawyers, including Nasrin Sotoudeh and Giti Pourfazel, to limit their professional activities or leave the profession altogether.[59] The Government continues to reject the notion that these individuals were imprisoned for lawful activities and notes that Ms. Hedayat has been freed and that Mr. Kaboudvand's prison term ends on 11 November 2017.

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[56] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/a-travesty-of-justice-un-experts-condemn-latest-conviction-of-prominent-rights-defender/.

[57] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/06/160627_nm_hunger_strike_narges_mohammadi (in Persian).

[58] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/a-travesty-of-justice-un-experts-condemn-latest-conviction-of-prominent-rights-defender/.

[59] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/07/sattar-beheshti-giti-pourfazel/.

57. On 26 May 2016, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued its opinion on the case of women's rights activist and human rights defender Bahareh Hedayat, calling her detention arbitrary and demanding her immediate release. Ms. Hedayat was given a brief furlough from Evin prison on 7 June, but was returned to prison on 13 June, less than a week later. She was convicted on multiple charges and sentenced to 7 1/2 years' imprisonment by a Tehran revolutionary court in 2010. Pursuant to article 134 of the Islamic Penal Code, Ms. Hedayat should have been released in June 2015 after she had served a sentence of five years for her most serious charge, "acting against the national security". Despite an order issued for her release, the judiciary added a suspended two-year sentence for charges filed against her in 2007 and she has been detained ever since.

58. The Special Rapporteur continues to express serious concern regarding the targeting, arrest and prosecution of labour union activists. Although the Government has allowed, and continues to allow, some labour protests to proceed without interference, the Special Rapporteur has received reports during the reporting period about the arrest and prosecution of labour activists for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of assembly and association. Those arrested include Ebrahim Maddadi, a leading member of the Tehran bus drivers' union, Esmaeil Abdi, Rasool Bodaghi and Mahmoud Beheshti Langroudi, teachers' rights activists, and Jafar Azimzadeh, Hashem Rostami and Mozafar Salehinia, independent trade union activists. In its response, the Government alleges that these activists "used [their] capacities in the field of labour [for the] consolidation of terroristic targets, persuasion of armed insurrection and subversive acts and [creation of] ethnic and religious hatred".

III. Thematic rights issues

A. Women's rights

59. The Islamic Republic of Iran fully or partially accepted 42 of the 53 recommendations related to women's rights at the outcome of its 2014 universal periodic review. Recommendations urging the Government to consider ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to reconsider provisions of the Islamic Penal Code that discriminate against women and to criminalize domestic violence, including marital rape, were rejected. In its response, the Government notes that the law allows women to place conditions on marriages that are not contrary to marriage contract requirements, and referred to the establishment of 24 "rehabilitation centres" and 31 "health centres" throughout the country for women and girls who have been subjected to domestic violence. The Government also maintains that "the issue of marital rape was not considered by many countries and cultures and mostly raised by extreme feminists".

60. Gender-based discrimination in matters of civil, political, social and economic rights continue to overshadow the remarkable advances the Islamic Republic of Iran has achieved in women's education and health. The country ranks at the bottom of countries within its income group in terms of women's economic participation and

political empowerment.[60] On 11 April 2015, the Minister of Labour, Cooperatives and Social Welfare, Ali Rabiei, noted that female unemployment in the Islamic Republic of Iran is twice as high as male unemployment and that women have migrated to seasonal and service-sector employment.[61] The country also remains in the bottom fifth percentile of 142 countries in overall equality for women.[62] In July 2016, President Rouhani announced that his administration would postpone the next round of examinations for government employment until an investigation had been conducted into the apparent gender disparity in employment.[63] In its response, the Government relates higher levels of female unemployment to various factors including unilateral economic sanctions and cultural attitudes.

61. In March 2016, the Guardian Council nullified the election of parliamentary candidate Minoo Khaleghi, who had been vetted and pronounced qualified to run for office during the February parliamentary elections. While no specific reason was given, the Guardian Council announced its decision following the release of pictures on the Internet that appear to show Ms. Khaleghi shaking hands with a man during a trip abroad.[64] Critics of the disqualification note that the Guardian Council is not vested with powers to remove elected candidates and that the power to certify the qualifications of an elected member of parliament is invested in the parliament itself.[65] In its response, the Government states that the case of Ms. Khaleghi has been referred to the inter-branch dispute settlement council and is the subject of legal proceedings.

62. On 18 April 2016, the chief of the Tehran police force, Hossein Sajedi Nia, announced a new plan for the deployment of 7,000 undercover "morality police" to enforce wearing of the hijab and "proper Islamic behaviour". President Rouhani and several members of his Government, including Shahinkokht Mowlaverdi, Vice-President for Women and Family Affairs, reportedly criticized the plan, stating that it would lead to unlawful interference in people's affairs and maintaining that police officials had not properly consulted the Government prior to announcing the plan.[66] The announcement follows the adoption of legislation by the parliament on 22 April 2015 which encourages ordinary Iranian citizens to enforce laws that prohibit acts considered to be vices under sharia, including the strict enforcement of the hijab for all Iranian women.[67] The law, titled "Plan to protect promoters of virtue and preventers of vice", calls for the establishment of an "office to promote virtue and prevent vice", supported by agencies operating under the command of the Supreme Leader. In its response, the Government defends the aforementioned actions, noting that "the veil is a moral issue [used] to maintain public security" and

[60] See http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=IRN; and http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01418/WEB/IMAGES/281150PA.PDF.

[61] See http://isna.ir/fa/news/94012206935/ (in Persian).

[62] See http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=IRN.

[63] See http://president.ir/en/94497.

[64] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/04/minoo-khaleghi/.

[65] See www.isna.ir/news/95012711687/ (in Persian).

[66] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/04/public-outcry-in-iran-over-plan-for-increased-morality-police-prompts-review/.

[67] See www.shora-rc.ir/Portal/File/ShowFile.aspx?ID=b19d40ae-ef4e-44ff-b556-fcb9bfff4758 (in Persian).

that promoting virtue and preventing vice is the responsibility of all Muslims, regardless of the sex of the offenders.

63. In July 2016, the parliament ratified the Reduction of Office Hours Act for Women with Special Circumstances.[68] Opponents of the legislation, which will reduce the working hours of women from 44 to 36 hours a week without reducing their total salaries, warn that the law may unintentionally erect barriers to the workforce participation of women.[69] The law would primarily affect women heads of household, those with children under the age of 7 and women with children or spouses with disabilities or incurable and chronic diseases.[70] Attempts by the Vice-President for Women and Family Affairs to introduce into the draft language covering men in similar situations were rejected by the parliament.[71] Opponents of the bill warn that without offering tax incentives for employers, the law will threaten women's job security.[72] In its response, the Government states that "the bill was passed to facilitate women's participation in the employment space and has been welcomed by many women's rights activists".

B. Children's rights

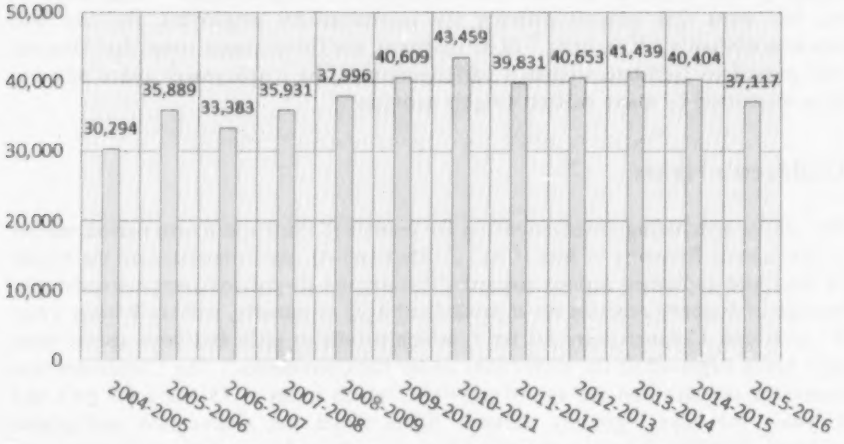
64. In its concluding observations on the combined third and fourth period reports of the Islamic Republic of Iran (CRC/C/IRN/CO/3-4), the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed serious concern "that despite its previous recommendations, the age of majority remains set at predefined ages of puberty, namely 9 lunar years for girls and 15 lunar years for boys, which results in girls and boys above those ages being deprived of the protections under the Convention". The Committee also expressed concern that the age of marriage, which is set at 13 years for girls and 15 years for boys, "gravely violates rights under the Convention and places children, in particular girls, at risk of forced, early and temporary marriages, with irreversible consequences on their physical and mental health and development". It urged the Government to "further increase the minimum age for marriage for both girls and boys to 18 years, and to take all necessary measures to eliminate child marriages in line with the State party's obligations under the Convention". In its response, the Government notes that many early marriages occur "according to customs of some tribes and villages", and alleges that marriages below the legal ages identified above cannot be registered unless the guardians and a court agree that it is in the interests of the juvenile.

65. In June 2016, a spokesperson for the Tehran-based Association to Protect the Rights of Children stated that approximately 17 per cent of all marriages in the country involve children, and emphasized the consequences that this situation poses for Iranian society.[73] According to an official government website, more than 37,000 marriages involving individuals under 15 years of age took place in the

[68] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/07/bill-to-reduce-the-working-hours-of-women/.
[69] See www.iribnews.ir/NewsText.aspx?ID=521921 (in Persian).
[70] See http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/legal_draft/state/847722 (in Persian).
[71] See http://isna.ir/fa/news/93042413829/ (in Persian).
[72] See www.iribnews.ir/NewsText.aspx?ID=521921 (in Persian).
[73] See /www.ilna.ir/ (in Persian).

period 2015-2016 (see figure IV).[74] The Special Rapporteur notes that these figures represent only registered marriages and that many marriages are never recorded in the country, especially in areas located in the periphery. In its response, the Government argues that "generalizing a minimum marital age of 18 to all regions of the world is in contradiction with scientific viewpoints" suggesting that the age of maturity can vary across regions and individuals. It also notes that the average marriage age in the Islamic Republic of Iran is much higher than 18 years of age.

Figure IV
Number of marriages of children under 15 years of age in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2004-2016



66. The Special Rapporteur also expresses concern regarding disturbing reports of physical, mental and sexual violence against children in schools. During the reporting period, local media outlets reported on several cases of such violence. In one incident, a video surfaced purporting to show a grade-school teacher in the city of Shush in Khuzestan province ruthlessly beating a student in the classroom.[75] Other reports documented the case of a 9-year-old girl named "Neda" who was repeatedly sexually assaulted by her teacher in Zanjan province. According to some reports, authorities released the perpetrator soon after his arrest, in part because a court questioned whether the relations involved rape or were voluntary illicit relations.[76] The perpetrator has reportedly been placed on administrative leave pending further investigations, but critics, including the Teachers' Union, have argued that more must be done to address such cases in a more systematic way.[77]

67. The Special Rapporteur expresses similar concern regarding disturbing reports about physical, mental and sexual violence, including murder, against children in

[74] See http://ir.voanews.com/a/iran-marraige/3375252.html (in Persian).
[75] See http://plus.ir/social/11208/ (in Persian).
[76] See http://sharghdaily.ir/News/92668/ (in Persian).
[77] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/05/160516_l57_iran_schools_students_pupils_corporal_punishment (in Persian).

domestic or family settings. In one such reported case, a father fatally shot his daughter, a university student, with a shotgun in the city of Khoy, in Azarbayjan-e Gharbi province, allegedly because she had brought "dishonour" to the family. According to article 220 of the Islamic Penal Code, a father or paternal grandfather who kills his child or grandchild can simply pay *diya* ("blood money") to the heirs of the victim and will not face other serious consequences for his action.

C. Rights of ethnic and religious minorities

68. In its concluding observations on the second period report of the Islamic Republic of Iran (E/C.12/IRN/CO/2), the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights expressed concern about severe restrictions on education and publishing in mother tongue languages of ethnic minorities. The Committee attributed poverty, discrimination, early marriage among girls and a lack of mandatory primary education in areas dominated by ethnic minority populations to higher illiteracy rates in those areas. The Committee also expressed concern that ethnic minorities "do not fully enjoy their right to take part in cultural life, including as a consequence of closures of publications and newspapers in minority languages". Despite some important recent steps in this regard, particularly in Kurdish-majority areas of the country, the Special Rapporteur continues to receive reports that the right to teach and publish in local languages remains either curbed or restricted. In its response, the Government notes that the illiteracy rate is less than 10 per cent for the "teachable population". It also maintains that Kurdistan University began accepting students in the field of Kurdish language and literature in 2015, and Tabriz University will do the same for Azeri Turkish in 2016.

69. The Special Rapporteur notes that of human rights activists and defenders who work on various political, social and economic issues in areas of the country disproportionately affected by poverty and violence are often targeted by security and judicial officials not only for their activities but also for their actual or imputed ethnic identity. The Special Rapporteur continued to receive troubling reports during the reporting period, suggesting that Azerbaijani Turk,[78] Ahwazi Arab,[79] Baluch,[80] Kurdish[81] and other ethnic minority human rights defenders are being targeted by security and judiciary officials for their peaceful activities, and he implores the Government to refrain from targeting ethnic minority rights activists. In its response, the Government claims that the Special Rapporteur unfairly labels individuals engaging in "terrorist and extremist measures" as human rights defenders.

70. The Special Rapporteur also expresses concern regarding an increased number of reports during the reporting period of armed clashes between security forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and armed individuals allegedly belonging to the peshmerga forces of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran. These incidents appear to have increased after announcements by the Kurdish Democratic Party leadership

[78] See www.ahraz.org/report-on-the-situation-of-iranian-azerbaijanis-regarding-human-rights-juni-2016/.

[79] See http://euahwazi.blogspot.com/.

[80] See http://balochcampaign.com/ (in Persian).

[81] See www.kmmk-ge.org/?p=569&lang=en%20target=.

that they plan to step up the activities of the peshmerga forces in support of the rights and aspirations of the country's Kurds.[82] The Government has warned that it will take all necessary measures against the armed groups and has reportedly engaged in security operations in several cities and towns in Kurdish-majority areas, including shelling areas where armed opposition groups have allegedly been active.[83] The Special Rapporteur urges both sides, and especially the Government, to refrain from engaging in the unlawful targeting, killing or collective punishment of unarmed civilians and individuals peacefully exercising their fundamental rights in these areas.

71. Reports indicate that members of religious minorities continue to face severe restrictions. Adherents of recognized religions, such as Christians (especially those of Muslim background), and of unrecognized ones, such Baha'is, continue to suffer discrimination and are reportedly prosecuted for peacefully manifesting their religious beliefs. In its response, the Government rejects allegations regarding restrictions on religious minorities, including Christians, and maintains that "house churches" are engaged in illegal activities because they do not secure the relevant permits from government officials. It also notes that the needs of the country's Christians are met and therefore there is no "need to establish or create new churches, including house churches".

72. Reports received by the Special Rapporteur suggest that at least 72 Baha'is were being detained as of 8 June 2016 in connection with the peaceful exercise of their faith.[84] In addition to reports of arbitrary arrests, detentions and prosecutions, the Special Rapporteur continues to receive troubling reports that the authorities continue to pursue activities that deprive Baha'is of their right to work, reportedly in line with a directive issued by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution in 1991.[85] These policies restrict the types of businesses and jobs Baha'i citizens can have, support the closing of Baha'i-owned businesses, place pressure on business owners to dismiss Baha'i employees and call for seizure of their businesses and property. In its response, the Government notes that despite their vast cooperation with the previous regime of the Shah and their role in suppressing people and managing the SAVAK secret service, living conditions for the majority of Baha'is in the Islamic Republic of Iran are "normal". It also maintains that "Baha'is have never been prosecuted simply for their beliefs".

73. On 8 June 2016, the Special Rapporteur issued a joint statement with the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief strongly condemning a wave of Government-sanctioned incitement and hatred following the publication of several government statements and publications attacking the Baha'i faith and community. They included a statement issued by the spokesperson for the judiciary in which he derided the daughter of former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Faezeh Hashemi, for her visit to the home of Baha'i leader Fariba Kamalabadi.[86] Ms. Hashemi visited Ms. Kamalabadi, one of seven former Baha'i leaders who were imprisoned in 2008 for exercising their faith, on 13 May following the latter's temporary release from

[82] See http://pdki.org/english/report-on-clashes-between-pdkis-peshmerga-forces-and-irans-irgc/.
[83] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/06/160625_an_iran_sepah_kurd_clashes (in Persian).
[84] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/most-recent-backlash-against-bahais/.
[85] See http://news.bahai.org/documentlibrary/TheBahaiQuestion.pdf.
[86] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/most-recent-backlash-against-bahais/.

prison. On 18 May, the spokesperson announced that the judiciary would pursue charges against Ms. Hashemi, who became acquainted with Ms. Kamalabadi during her own brief imprisonment in Evin prison in 2012, because her decision to meet the political prisoner constituted a "very ugly and obscene act".

74. Since mid-May 2016, 169 religious, judicial and political leaders have allegedly openly spoken or written against the Baha'i community in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Between 18 May and 4 June, in Friday prayer sermons clerics reportedly attacked, condemned or criticized beliefs espoused by members of the Baha'i community, declaring that the Baha'i faith was essentially a fabricated political party masquerading as a religion.[87] A number of newspapers published articles and op-eds linking members of the Baha'i community with the country's enemies and branding them "Zionists", and encouraging violence against them. The Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief warned that the combination of incitement against, and lack of protection for, the Baha'is "places the community before a very dangerous precipice where its very existence may be threatened".[88] In its response, the Government notes that "the responsibility of opinions expressed by non-governmental personalities lies with themselves".

75. Sunni Muslims, who constitute the largest religious minority in the Islamic Republic of Iran, continue to assert that the authorities do not appoint or employ members of their communities in high-ranking government positions, including as Cabinet-level ministers. They have also raised concerns regarding restrictions on the construction of Sunni mosques in Shia-majority areas, including Tehran, and the execution or imminent execution of several Sunni activists who are accused by the Government of involvement in terrorist-related activities. On 5 July 2016, 18 reformist members of the parliament sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior complaining about the closure of a Sunni prayer hall in the town of Eslamshahr and that authorities prevented Sunni worshipers from gathering at several other mosques and prayer halls to perform Eid al-Fitr prayers.[89] The Government asserts that there are over 10,000 Sunni mosques in the country and that the numbers of Sunnis in Tehran "do not justify building a mosque there". It also maintains that demands to build mosques for Sunnis in the capital reflect efforts to "marginalize Sunnis" and "create division among Muslims that cause [the] isolation and extremism of Sunnis".

76. On 2 August 2016, human rights groups reported that authorities at Rajai Shahr prison had executed at least 9 and as many as 20 prisoners convicted of terrorist-related charges and sentenced to death in revolutionary courts.[90] The vast majority of those executed are believed to have been Sunni Kurds, who identified themselves as peaceful Sunni activists and rejected the accusations against them. On the same day, the Intelligence Ministry confirmed the execution of a group of prisoners alleged to have had ties to "Salafist" and "takfiri" groups responsible for armed terrorist

[87] See www.radiozamaneh.com/278692; http://khavarestan.ir/news/62023 (in Persian); and www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13950231000553 (in Persian).

[88] See http://shaheedoniran.org/english/dr-shaheeds-work/most-recent-backlash-against-bahais/.

[89] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/07/160705_l39_sunns_mosque_majlis (in Persian).

[90] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/08/iran-executes-kurdish-prisoner-despite-claim-of-forced-confession/.

activities against the State.[91] Among those reportedly hanged was Shahram Ahmadi, a Sunni Kurd initially imprisoned and convicted on charges of *moharebeh*, "acting against the national security" and "propaganda against the State". Mr. Ahmadi steadfastly rejected the accusations against him and declared that he was a peaceful Sunni activist. Human rights groups have documented serious procedural flaws in Mr. Ahmadi's trial as well as in the trials of several dozen other Sunni Muslim prisoners on death row, including some of those reportedly executed on 2 August 2016. Mr. Ahmadi's brother, Bahram Ahmadi, was executed along with five other activists accused of engaging in terrorism in 2012. Both Mr. Ahmadi and his mother have written open letters to the Special Rapporteur documenting the serious rights violations in the case and asking the authorities to reconsider the death sentence, and the Special Rapporteur had previously expressed his serious concerns to the Government regarding the brothers' death sentences.[92] In its response, the Government rejects any and all allegations that those executed were human rights activists, asserting that they were part of "a takfiri terrorist group" that killed 21 people and injured another 40. It also denies allegations that the defendants were denied their due process rights.

77. Other Muslims belonging to various minority sects, such as the Nematollahi Gonabadi order and Yarsan, reportedly continue to face a range of human rights violations, including attacks on their prayer centres, destruction of community cemeteries and arrest and torture of their community leaders. In June 2016, the leadership of the Yarsan faith wrote to the Supreme Leader requesting that he support a constitutional amendment that would prohibit discrimination against the faith's followers and recognize their religious beliefs.[93] In its response, the Government maintains that its "formal and practical stance ... regarding followers of these two sects is to respect their beliefs and citizenship rights".

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

78. The Special Rapporteur has highlighted, in the present and previous reports, a number of legislative steps and political developments that constitute encouraging possibilities for the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran. They include the consideration of draft legislation and the adoption of amendments to the Islamic Penal Code, which can contribute to strengthening protections for the right to life and which can lead to a decrease in the staggering number of executions documented in the country for the last decade. They also include amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code, which can contribute to strengthening protections for due process rights.

79. However, information received by the Special Rapporteur during the current reporting period indicates that a lack of adherence by security officials and a lack of judicial enforcement enfeeble the protections envisioned by laws that would otherwise protect the rights of the accused, including fair trial guarantees and strict prohibitions on the use of torture and ill-treatment against detainees.

[91] See www.bbc.com/persian/iran/2016/08/160803_177_takfiri_arrest (in Persian).
[92] See https://hra-news.org/fa/letters/a-185; and http://hesarr.com/ (both in Persian).
[93] See www.iranhumanrights.org/2016/06/yarsan/.

It should be further noted that the new penal and criminal procedure codes do not address some of the most pressing issues raised by the United Nations human rights machinery, and that revisions by the Guardian Council to the latter leave some of the most vulnerable members of Iranian society unprotected, including journalists, lawyers, human rights defenders, political activists and religious and ethnic minorities, who are often charged with national security crimes.

80. Provisions of the penal code continue to violate the country's international human rights obligations by criminalizing the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights or other acts that are not recognized as crimes under international law. The code also continues to discriminate against girls, women and religious minorities. Moreover, those who violate national and international rights protections continue to enjoy impunity in an atmosphere that justifies serious human rights violations perpetrated by some officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including members of the judiciary.

81. The rate of executions reportedly taking place in the Islamic Republic of Iran remains alarming despite the legislative steps taken by the Government and a nascent dialogue aimed at examining the merits of the country's use of the death penalty. To this effect, the Special Rapporteur continues to urge the authorities to consider examining the views they have shared about the root causes of drug abuse and crime in the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as their views about the deterrent effects of the country's drug policies. He also wishes to note that there is no "reliable evidence of the deterrent effects of executions. Nor have any empirical studies investigated the impact of capital punishment when used on a more extensive scale as an exemplary punishment in law-and-order campaigns" such as the country's war on drugs.[94] However, a cursory examination of the escalating influx of illegal narcotics and their rising abuse in the country offers some insight into the impact of the Government's approach to this phenomenon.

82. The Special Rapporteur therefore continues to appeal to the authorities to declare a moratorium on the use of executions for all crimes not considered "most serious" under international law, and calls on the authorities to consider working with international and national stakeholders to amend its anti-narcotics laws in line with international human rights conventions to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party. He urges the authorities to reconsider laws that render acts not considered to be crimes under international law capital offences. He appeals to the Government to abandon piecemeal reforms and to immediately and unconditionally prohibit the execution of juvenile offenders, defined as individuals under 18 years of age at the time they committed a capital offence.

83. The Special Rapporteur also remains concerned about ongoing activities that constitute a derogation from international human rights obligations to respect the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly and access to information. He notes that despite the Government's assertion that "freedom of

[94] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Moving Away from the Death Penalty: Arguments, Trends and Perspectives*, 2014, p. 70.

opinion and expression, media activities and freedom of peaceful assembly are always protected", activities deemed a legitimate exercise of those rights, including activities focused on criticizing government actions and policies, often incur charges of endangering the national security. The Special Rapporteur urges the authorities to strengthen aspects of the 1985 Press Law to ensure that persons are protected from acts that impair the free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, which is essential to the protection of other rights. He also urges the Government to reconsider aspects of policies that undermine the rights of individuals to associate and assemble with like-minded persons for the purposes of promoting peaceful activities.

84. The Special Rapporteur welcomes recent efforts to address both violence against women and inequities in education and economic participation. He encourages the Government to continue to amend laws in line with its legal obligations and pledges made during the universal periodic review to protect the equal and full enjoyment by women of their civil, political, social and economic rights, including the right to freedom of movement, the right to work and the right to be free from discrimination, especially in the workplace.

85. In its response to the present report, the Government maintains that the Islamic Republic of Iran works to "secure the rights of all followers of official religions according to the law". However, restrictions on the rights of religious minorities in the country remain a source of deep concern. Measures that exclude religious minorities, especially adherents of unofficial religions, from legal protections for civil, political, social or economic rights or that impose special restrictions on the practices or manifestations of their beliefs continue to violate the country's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and should be addressed. Adherents of official and unofficial religious communities continue to report arrests and prosecutions for worship and participation in religious community affairs, including in private homes. The Special Rapporteur therefore urges the authorities to recognize that freedom of religion or belief entails the freedom to choose a religion or belief and that measures that impose special restrictions on the practice of other faiths, or that discriminate on the basis of religion or belief, violate the guarantee of equal protection under article 26 of the International Covenant.

86. The Special Rapporteur continues to be disturbed by reports from members of ethnic minority communities regarding arbitrary arrests, detentions, torture and prosecution for protected activities that promote social, economic, cultural and linguistic rights. He urges the authorities to recognize that dialogue and the inclusive participation of all citizens in a diverse society can form the basis for enduring initiatives that address poverty and development and can also serve to strengthen protections for the rights of all ethnic minorities in the country. He encourages the authorities to ensure that the rights of the members of the country's most vulnerable communities are protected and respected.

87. The Special Rapporteur reiterates his firm belief that the Government could significantly improve the country's human rights situation with the full implementation of the recommendations accepted at the outcome of the universal periodic review in 2014. He therefore renews his requests for further

dialogue and for a visit to the country to both discuss the Government's plan for implementing these recommendations and explore constructive ways in which the mandate holder and other special procedure representatives can support the country's implementation efforts. After almost six years of work to monitor the country situation and to establish a constructive relationship with the Government, the Special Rapporteur believes that the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran merits a measure of confidence, which must be strengthened by tangible efforts and outcomes that lay the groundwork for perceptible progress.